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BY

GODFREY EGREMONT

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ANIMALIA CREATORIS.

See the light through the dark,
Feel the wind that blows thy bark,
What art thou that thou should'st care?
One is All and everywhere.

He Who caused, must control
Universe, Existence, Soul—
Strikes He through thy hand or mine?
What He lendeth is it thine?

Host art thou or a guest?
Think'st thou such is worst or best—
This is truth but that mere show?
What is thinking? Dost thou *know*?

Life, what is't? canst thou tell?
What is ill or what is well?
"Yea," thou sayest, "surely so."
When thy "Yea" may mean His "No." ?

He or thou, which, the King?
If thou bid it "Soul, thy wing
Preen not; yet a moment stay!",
Would thyself thyself obey?

Holdest thou that, apart
From His choice, because thou art

Now, thou wilt continue Then?
Who, save thee, said this?, and when?

Definite, held in fee
Thy full-parcelled entity,
Broadest of the mundane span,
'Mid thy fellow-men a man.

Not than they more nor less,
Wrapped with them in such a dress,
Fashioned for the needs of Time,
Perfect as a perfect chime.

Not the most delicate
Midge which darts athwart the late
Setting sun wears robe more fine
Than this plasmic house of thine.

Eagles' cloud-piercing sight
Shames thine eyeball; and the might,
Many a beast's which prowls or swims,
Dwells not in thy feebler limbs.

Yet, compared, weak and blind
These, dwarfed by men's ampler mind
To the lower grade of things,
These the creatures, they the kings.

Thus is thy sovran sphere
Sure, conceded, Now, and Here;
Ruler of all realms within
Time and Sense and Kith and Kin.

Yet, because, so, is this
Thou would'st claim completer bliss,
Plead thou hold'st a mortmain bond
On whate'er may lie beyond;

That, estates feoffed in Devon
Entail better lands in Heaven;
That Existence guarantees
All of these and more than these.

Criest thou—"Never all—
Days and years, dry leaves that fall
Grains among the centuries' dust,
These the aeons' flaking rust!

"Lo, evolved from a clod
Shakespeare's paragon, a god—
Little less—who wrests from Earth
All her hoarded afterbirth.

"Lightning, light, vapour, fire,
Shackled slaves of his desire;
While his piston'd pulsings beat
Fluctuant oceans to a street.

"Penetrates; magnifies;
By the Unseen bids the Unknown rise;
Analyses; weighs the Vast;
Moulds the Present; grips the Past.

"Self debars, curbs, defeats,
Spurns, distrusts, attacks, retreats;
Swerves not from a high intent,
Reason prince and instrument.

"Rounded thus, perfected,
What a being lifts his head!
Intellectual, shrewd, alert,
Bold, inventive, apt, expert.

"Scepter'd Will chains the brute;
Lofty purposes transmute
Base aims; Truth and Good confer
Life's fair crown of Character.

"How can this but persist?
Heaven gleams through the human mist;
Man himself the voucher be
Naught less than immortal he."

What is not relative
To the sphere all have that live—
Bird or insect, beast or man?
Where inheres the faulty Plan?

Yea, and this Intellect
In its working and effect,
Runs it not Life's common norm
Through the lowest as highest form?

Though our term 'instinct' rate
Naught but man participate;
Circumscribe creation till
His alone Will and Free-Will;

Arrogate, class, assert
That mere animated dirt
Which though brief may be intense,
Crammed with palpitating sense.

Much from much, least from least,
Bird or insect, man or beast;
Take the rule nor spurn nor boast—
Gauged thus, where and whose the Most?

Durst we brag spire and dome
Shame the ingenious beaver's home?
Lovliest house of all is ours
When the bee builds hers from flow'rs?

That our babe's nest engirds
Warmlier than the brooding bird's?
Plant we cities? Yet the ant
Planted hers ere we did plant!

Trained to read air and sky
Modern augurs prophesy
Sunshine, storm, what wind shall blow—
But the spiders truelier know.

Wilt thou boast, "Man is found
More than any true and brave!"
'As,' not 'more'—the faithful hound
Dies upon his master's grave.

Or, " Of Earth's task-assigned,
Men in patient might surpass
All." All? No! Not the maligned
Doubly patient doughty ass!

"Beethoven, Wagner soar
Music-winged to Heaven's own pale!"
But the lark sang there before!
Have they quelled the nightingale?

And, behold, these complain
Not; toil for no recompense;
Nor than we more wicked, vain—
Power for power and sense for sense.

Reasoned Will through the chain,
In the small wise slaver-ant
Milking captive aphids plain
As in the wise elephant,

These possess e'en as we,
With the variant of degree,
Their as our perception stands
Graded to the need's demands.

Life in One, Life in All,
Under varying Form the same
Infinite-infinitesimal
Grasping-persisting Force and Flame.

While our slow Knowledge grows,
Difference lessening shrinks and shows,
As we deeplier probe and strip,
But one common workmanship.

Dare aver we the bird
By no grateful feeling stirred
Drinks, nor makes her heavenward nod
Dimly cognizant of God?

Life of Life! Light of Light!
Is our apprehension bright?
Is her apprehension dim?
Brightness, dimness, each from Him!

Perfect aims, perfect use
Of present means—no abuse
No default—to perfect ends
Theirs, not man's who mars and mends.

Theirs, the 'brutes'—man's the name—
Yet for them will any claim
That their perfect work hath won
Higher life when this is done?

Will such work win the Gem
For us? then, it must for them!
Take the rule nor spurning boast
That our much is also Most.

If this true use of powers
Fruitful harvesting of hours
In the cheese wherein we breed,
Bring the beatific meed,

Larger Life's larger rights—
Have not these our kindred mites
Gained, and worthily, the prize;
Proved their 'title to the skies'?

They immortal as we
If thus immortality
Earned as of desert shall bless—
Final Justice can no less.

Thoughts of God crystallized
Into things! each loved and prized—
Splendid, sordid, great, or small—
In His heart Who fashioned all—

Giant-sun Sirius,
Sight-defying bacillus,
Universes trillion-starred,
Tiny beetles' armour-shard,

Rhythmic light's ether-chasm,
Basal twin-cells' moulded plasm,
Flower, or water, air, or sod
Instinct with the act of God.

Who may then draw a line
Instant through His vast design
Where the deft machine was wrought
Running at the touch of Thought?

'There!' 'No, here!' 'Here!' 'No, there!'
'Nowhere!' 'Somewhere!' 'Otherwhere!'
'Never!' 'Ever!' By-and-by!',
'Us, not them!', 'Not It, but I!'

Babel! scan this machine—
Built a nerve-meshed lodging, seen
Causal-functive to imprime
Separate consciousness in Time;

Means whereby personal,
Concrete, individual,
Sentient being, in this phase
Of existence, Self displays;

Thus expressed, fitted, sent,
Seizes on the environment,
Energises, assimilates,
Finds, adapts, perpetuates—

Tool, machine, tissued, sexed,
Exquisitely interplexed,
Gemmuled force-form beauty-waked,
Breath-fired motor Reason-braked.

Verge or core, heart or brain,
The mechanic beat is plain;
Mental taction open springs,
Involitioned, prior things

Record-celled counterfoils
Which from convoluted coils,
Fixedly recurrent flash
At Association's clash.

Vascular, afferent,
Efferent, contractile, blent
Processes where Impulse sways
Inmost ganglions of the maze

Which receive, store, transmit,
Reflex-mandate-active sit,
Ceaselessly—what craftmanship's
Richlier noble to eclipse?

Sayest thou "Here, supreme
Ruler I."? Hast, then, no dream?
"Thou? Not," saith the Hypnotist,
"What thou wilt but what I list!"

Ductile serve, direly learn
Guileless-guilty thou canst earn
Both the thief's or murderer's fate—
Thine, that didst; his, instigate.

Yea, thyself tell the tale
Oft exact response doth fail,
Overrun or undershot
Worked what thou commandedst not.

Cramped to Earth's human dust
This Machine, but thine in trust;
Earth, whose orbit gyres the Vast
As a gnat her air hath passed.

Neighbour Mars, handmaid Moon—
Not one function of the boon
There shall stand—What of the far
Infinite-myriad star on star?

Grain in grain, jot in jot
Human Might, from Time's first dot
To the closing of the scroll,
Though knit in a single soul.

Reason, Nous, Intellect—
Powers Will in that Might reflect
Serve but in this narrow bound,
Peering in the near Profound.

Breaks the morn, dies the day,
Dwells more beauty in one ray—
While thou draw'st a breath—than e'er
Men have compassed since they were.

Conquests won leave behind
Greater triumphs for the mind;
Many a Darwin sharplier stir
Science; Truth's keen scavenger;

Wider fields, deeper skies
Yield their treasure to her eyes—
Wider, deeper, still the same
Connate-disparate basal flame;

Knowledge grow, Music, Art
Play a universal part;
Wisdom and Philosophy
Broider all the things that be.

Yet what new instrument
Wilt thou buy or else invent
Which shall with thy deft Machine
Pierce the Immaterial Scene?

Wilt ascend, then, thereby
To that 'mountain great and high,'
View the city gemmed 'foursquare',
Quaff Life's river flowing there?

Hear the pearled portals rolled,
Tread her street's transparent gold,
Seize the angel's reed, and bring
Back God's deepest hidden thing?

Shall thy charmed instrument
Measure the Divine Intent?
Show the glowing spectrum-line
Of Eternal Love's design?

Wilt thou soar, searching, find,
On the chariot of the mind,
Like Elijah heavenward climb,
Force, as he, the gates of Time?

Flaunt a self-vested crown,
Drop, as he, thy mantle down,
Shouting "I have found Him! I!
Wherefore we shall never die!"?

Yea? But, know, Egotist,
Though we bear what doth persist
That on neither these nor those
Immortality bestows.

What if some sentient Whole
Merge the individual soul?
Psychically intensified
Pass to hear true Life denied?

Consciousness hold her own
But while reaped what she hath sown?
Kept through thousand purposed ways
But a moment's personal phase?

Ay, although Greater Hands
Raised to flame the soul's dull brands
Till the wrechedest who plod
Warmed them at a hearth of God.

Vanity's postulate—
Bound is He Who did create
To bestow the larger gift
Making good our own unthrift!

Is the gift aught but fair—
Sunshine, summer-ambient air,
Blooms of wifehood, flower of man,
Knowledge, joys, brimmed in a span?

Sacred boon! precious trust!
Though amid its human dust
Ne'er found true Life's golden ore
Didst thou grope for evermore.

Fleshly seed, fleshly root
Pregnant of eternal fruit?
What? did Paul catch glory's grace
From the dying Stephen's face?

Ere he saw, had not Light
Struck him blind to former sight?
Bethlehem to Emmaus
Did the Christ's friends know Him thus?

Gardener—Magdalen!
His own "Mary" taught her then;
At death's portal e'en must He
Quickened in the spirit be.

Couldst thou roam sphere on sphere
Understanding all, thine ear
At the heart of things cognize
How through Form they functionize;

Near 'mid kenned mighty stars
Pry, or where past visual bars
Mightier suns and worlds but sow
Lenses with a cloudy glow;

Through the huge cosmic plan,
Whorled sidereal empyrean,
Were the last jot tabulate,
Weighed and measured, on thy slate;

Howsoe'er Being bind
Matter in accord with Mind,
Into whatsoever mould
Organisms are cast and fold;

Shaped for scenes, armed with pow'rs
Nowise predicable from ours,
Elemental, simple-free,
Marvels of complexity;

Far beneath, far beyond
Earth's existent creatures' bond,
Punier triumphs than a boy's,
Titan forces tossed as toys;

Narrow scopes, dwindled days,
Higher cycles, larger ways—
This their stories' last intent
"We are but impermanent!

Handling no blest To-Be,
Life's pale reflexes as ye,
Grasping naught of ultimate
In our myriad-serial state."

Once a star leaped to flame,
Wrapped in floods of fire became
One tremendous whirling blaze,
Glowed to darkness, died to days.

This no tale forged for cloyed
Quidnuncs, but a world destroyed—
Instantly—before keen eyes
Technic-trained to search the skies.

Theirs no Life's master-key,
Creatures gifted in degree,
Whom the Maker thence withdrew,
Purged by fire, from Old to New.

Keep thy soul! realize
What of More the Less implies
Though disjunct—a leaf, all trees;
One, all blooms; a drop, all seas;

One impinged ray, all suns;
One molecular thrill that runs,
Ether, force, heat, atmosphere;
One grain, all worlds far and near;

Incomplete transient states
Of existence, That which waits
Hid divinely deeper true
Life abiding ever new

Nor by bournes fettered nor
Circumstance, superior,
Vitally self-absolute,
Life indeed both flower and fruit.

For thy use drawn and bent,
Chiming with the environment,
Comes thine image from thy meat,
From the oxen and the wheat?

See the Light through the dark;
O, be thine, that quickening spark!

He conditions Who hath made—
Breath'st without His will and aid?

Who hath brought? Who shall bring?
He is Love Who wrought this thing,
He is Love, and Love is King
Everywhere, through everything.

FRIEDRICHSRUH.

"My grandfather had very able councillors who had the honour to carry out his sublime ideas."—The German Emperor, Wilhelm II, passim.

A gentleman, cool-headed, obstinate,
And narrow-viewed, thus fitting well the role
Of Prussian king, yet shrewder than the scroll
Ancestral e'er contained—in this, to rate
Himself the fly on Bismarck's wheel, nor bate
Due recognition of that master-soul
While on its broader aims and further goal
But dimly following, scarce-appreciate,
Till at Versailles its mandate, through the bland
Badenser uttered, made an Emperor!—wise
To know whose work the firm-clamped Fatherland:
Where, now, no hand may deprecating rise,
Nor tongue impugn for him who wrought and plann'd
"Thou royal ingrate! He bestowed the Prize!"

CORONATION.

We British have not crowned Thee King, O Christ,
Thou Son of God, though called by Thy dear name!
Still worshipping our Herods we acclaim
Them gods, not men; 'mid feudal lures enticed,
By these self-glorying pigmies all-sufficed,
We cry, while still Thou stands't betrayed to shame,
"No King but Caesar!", falsely-loyal flame
Their adulation, leaving Thee unpriced;
France with a drunkard's trembling lip invites
The old embrace; our kin profane Love's debt
And offer incense on the idol-heights;
They have forgotten, and we, long, forget,
O'er freemen Thine alone are sovran rights:
O thorn-gashed Brow that waits our crowning yet!

CINCINNATUS.

Far o'er the furrows
He saw many coming—
Consuls and tribunes,
Senators, aediles,
From Rome the loved mother;
With the old courtesy
Stopped the strong oxen
Yet held his plow-handles,
Looking back curiously—
"O Cincinnatus,
Come thou and save us!
The foeman are on us;
Now, near the city;

Now, near the temples;
Now, near our dearest;
Come Cincinnatus,
Be thou Dictator!"
Then dropping the handles
He let the reins idly
Flap in the furrows;
Went, of all Romans
More Roman than any,
To Rome the loved mother;
Headed the legions;
Beat back the foemen;
Then returned quickly
Where they had found him;
And in due season
Finished his plowing.

Now, in our ages
If a man conquer
Afield for his country
In fighting her battles,
In bringing deliverance
From loathed domination,
He seizes on empire,
Dubs himself Monarch,
King, Imperator—
This or that title
Regal, imperial;
Nay if some ancestor
In the past centuries
Once did his duty,
Once served the nation,
Now his descendants
Known by his blazon,

Fat in possession
Of his great honours
In the name of the dead man
Pick the bones of the living;
Spend without earning;
Assume without merit;
Crass, irresponsible,
Make laws unelected,
By this or that scutcheon
The dead man had taken;
By these or those acres
The dead man had wrested
Through this or that harpy
Sitting as Master
On thrones and with sceptres,
Usurping the royal
Right of the peoples
To rule by their chosen
Brothers in council,
By themselves only,
For themselves only,
Ruled, but the rulers.
Yea, of the Romans
Have we adopted
What is but pagan,
Cruel, and petty.

O Cincinnatus,
Would thou wert living,
English, American,
French, German, Russian,
Greek, Norsk, Italian!
Then would we hail thee,

Old Roman Moltke,
Knowing thou would'st not
Ask e'en *his* wages:—
"O Cincinnatus,
Come thou and save us!
Lo, how these foemen
Of our own household
Take all the kernel,
Leave us the husking;
Roll in the riches
Filched from the nation;
Flash by in splendour
While we are naked;
Wallow in plenty
While we are starving;
Now and then fling us
Crusts our own baking—
Coin in the kennel,
Coin which they handle
Because in our nescience
Ere the light lit us
We paid their forefathers
Wages in mortmain;
So thus from the graveyard,
The chancel, the chapel,
The tomb monumental,
Funereal marble,
The dead hand yet grips us,
The dead fingers throttle;
Through these of their lineage
Now they tread under,
Flout us and fetter,

Greaten our burthens,
Deepen our bondage,
Forging fresh shackles;
Strive to encumber
Our march through the Present,
Lest going Onward
We shake off their talons.
O Cincinnatus,
Come thou and save us!"

A SONGSTER.

A dreary day of heavy rain
Oppressing as a dull-gnawn pain;
Horizon-blotted, smoke-sprayed, near
As far gray-brown, the atmosphere;
In drizzle through surrounding miles
Wet slates, flushed gutters, rill-streamed tiles;
A sluggish wind that nothing lifts
Nor back the veiling vapour drifts.

Alas, within as out the same!
Bedimmed the mind's enkindling flame,
The needed work in hope long planned
Lags impotently 'neath my hand,
The murky hour infolds my sense
Till thinking is a vain pretense;
New-quickened of the brooding sky
Long-quelled regrets come trooping nigh;
The will benumbed by humid airs
Lets thronging in o'er-ready cares;

And in the thick, deed-strangling mist
Hard is the fight to but exist.

Hark! thrilling closely at mine ear
A heavenly carol breaketh clear,
A feathered singer perching by
Raises his Jubilate high,
Nor waking echoes of the tomb
But lilting bravely through the gloom;
With keener eye than mine he sees
Himself embowered in sun-bathed trees,
Wings warbling through bright space to rest
Where Love and he have built a nest,
With happy prescience he descries
The glowing blue of summer skies,
Flinging aloft the note that tells—
Beyond the gloom—of blossomed dells,
Of days to come when this hath passed
Each one more lovely than the last:—

And as triumphantly he sings,
God's bird to me that solace brings.

BIRTHRIGHT.

"Now all questions of Parliamentary representation are over and done with."—(*Lord Salisbury, May*, 1899.)

Behold this blinded leader groping wide:
As fable paints the bird of Afric blind!
Or the dull clods who deemed Galileo lied,
Or a smug idiot-swimmer whose warped mind

Claims he hath stemmed the seaward-sweeping tide—
Its cosmic ocean-throb unmarked, denied.

Nor goods, nor lands, but men compose the State;
Man the sole unit, Man the aggregate.
Spread thy rich acres far? art thou a lord?
Piled high thy pelf?—therein is thy reward.
Are not possessions power enough that thou
Would'st filch the Birthright—his who drives the plow,
Or his who stopes thy mine, or weaves thy wool,
Or builds thy ships, or crams thy pocket full
From the starved wage of an industrial plight
Where a machine is gold and souls but dirt?
Yet would'st thou hoodwink Ignorance, bribe or fight
Weak Poverty to yield it? Though thou wert
In Rank or Wealth and their encroaching might
Ten thousand times ten thousand millionaires
Thou art but one man, with no further right
Than one man's voice upon the Land's affairs.

SONG.

In Life's halcyon weather,
By Youth's laurell'd way,
Love and I together
Went a-making hay,
Earth a Summer-shining,
Time a roundelay.

O our fun and folly!
O the smell of hay!
Lads and lassies jolly,

Jack and Madge and May,
Love in kisses twining—
That was Yesterday!

For chill skies and breezes
Years and Care array—
Care that nips and freezes—
Love and I grown gray
Vow, to cheat repining,
Yet 'tis Yesterday.

MOLENE.

Be blessing on thee aye, Molène! for thou
Didst bury England's dead, by Finistère
Cast to the waters, and with reverent care
Bestowed each bruiséd corse, and simple vow
And benediction of thy bended brow
In love o'er these our dear ones resting where
French voices chime, French lilies blossom fair
Above them, teaching all the nations how
Despite their separating bars of speech,
Or frontier lines, or waves that threatening toss,
Or stranger thought, or ancient feud and breach,
Yet in the Christ shall gain make up the loss,
Yet may they draw them closer each to each
In Peace beneath the shadow of His cross.

?

In that gray shrine of mighty Cromwell's dust
Long reft, an Empress, princes, princesses, peers,
And millionaires are met for fifty years'
Increscent sovranty's unbroken trust
To thank the Eternal King, the Only Just;
Without, the trumpets' brassy clangour; cheers
And smiles of commoners official fears
From place amid the pomp discreetly thrust;
But, further, though not far from that high stage,
The starveling limbs by foul rags roped, his face
Already aged with only three years' age,
A tiny match-maker a little space
Risks loss of bread to listen.

Shall we gauge
True Progress by the apex or the base?
1887.

ETHEL.

We know her for a little child,
Yet seeming when she turned and smiled
Of more than mortal loveliness—
A being only formed to bless.

The light which left her large gray eyes
Reflected gleams from deeper skies,
The look which greeted those around
With men and women ne'er is found,
The laugh a-rippling to the sun
Can scarce by simple maid be won,

The tones wherewith her voice had part
Brought unknown rapture to the heart,
The wavy curls which clasped her face
Afar had drawn their wondrous grace;
And round about her always flowing,
And stronger, rarer ever growing,
A mystic essence of delight
Made Heaven be near and day more bright.

What is it dowered us by a child—
That holy sense still undefiled
By grosser motions of the earth,
Bearing no taint of fleshly birth?
What is it breathes, now near, now far,
Of things we know not, yet which are
Hidden within we know not where,
Akin to all things good and fair?
Which feels a power like its own
In childish mien and childish tone,
And welcomes it, and prays the guest
To lodge abidingly and rest—
Is like a palpitating beam
Of sunshine thrilled again to dream
It touched a brother in the dark
And knows at once the vagrant spark—
Or as we look upon a face
We never saw before, some grace
Will strike an inner chord and blend
That stranger with the dearest friend—
We know not wherefore, name no name,
We only feel, and feeling, blame
Our want of knowledge to complete
The gift of knowing aught so sweet?

I stand before her while she flies
Along the sward in earthly guise;
I stand before her while she sings,
And wonder for the angel-wings.
I wonder half-expectantly
To see her rise, and smile, and flee
From sight amid the clouds and stars
Like bird from out her prison-bars.
I know not why she should have found
A home with us, while, all around,
The melting heavens invite her hence;
Nor what my earnest love's pretence
Could falter forth to cause her stay
Giving fresh glory to the day,
E'en for a moment, did she spurn
Our dull delights and straightly turn
Away from us to some far spot
Where mortal joys are all forgot
In scenes ethereal—where the time
Goes honey-handed through a clime
Which we may not imagine! Why
Should she not show she came from high
And was not cast in human mould
Although its fashion may enfold?

I take her hand, as, then, she leads
My footsteps through the pleasant meads,
A newer grace in all I find,
A richer beauty intertwined,
A sunnier land before me lies,
A goldener sunshine fills the skies,
A lovelier crimson tips the rose—
She charms it all where'er she goes.

O, can that hand be guiding me
To sight where erst I could not see?
And from the depths of those deep eyes
What gleams from Heaven may on me rise?

I gaze and marvel if the mild
High Father's light dwells in the child;
If her pure influence be a part
Of perfect Life, her gentle heart
Be beating true through shade or shine
With pulsings of the Great Divine.

A NEW YEAR.

Dear bells and true
Ring out the hour,
Far float the New
From your high tower
There nigh the blue,
Time's loaded flower
Dropping like dew
Time in a shower.

What do we hear
Trembling away?
What but the Year
Parting for aye
Seed-like in drear
Moments or gay,
Time falling sere
Sown in the clay.

'Earth, Man, and Time,'—
Hark to the chime!
'Earth is a jot,
'Time soon is not,
'Man hath the soul
'True Life in trust,
'Death but a toll
'Paid by his dust
'That he may climb
'Heavenward from Time.'

PESSIMISM.

Open the window wide
And let in the sun!
Glory and life in a tide
The day hath begun:
"Ah!", and many have sighed,
"Were the day but done!"

Though these many have sighed,
Will Joy be out-spun?
Beauty and Love less affied?
The hours bated run?
Open the window wide
And let in the sun!

WATERPOTS.

Did not the Immortal Master of mankind
Bid those who held His oracles "Be glad!
Rejoice!"? did they not serve before Him clad
In vocal joy? shall we as fools and blind
Hearken the bardlets who would have us bind
Our brows with melancholy—deem that mad
The merry are, Wisdom is ever sad,
The sweetest angel-song were sweeter whined?

What is the whole world's face but smiling-round,
And laughs up Godward! Do we please Him least
Who laugh the laughter given us to resound
In Joy—not levity—guests at His feast
Here in Life's ante-chamber, reason-crowned
Tuning that note which marks man from the beast?

IN SODOM?

(*"Lord So-and-So has written in a French publication, claiming Shakespeare and other of our greatest souls as his co-bestialists."*)

Do we dwell there, Lord God? is the loved land
Thou gav'st us for our own and sett'st impearl'd
The north seas' Gem before an envious world
Become what were the cities thou hast banned
With rain of fire—as doth that vile, dis-manned,
Brute voice promulgate? Better she were hurled
Miles down a sudden maelstrom, better whirled
A cinder into space, our Britain, grand
But in infamy—if the beast snarl aright!

O God Who seest us treat the thief as one
No longer human, and with sentence light
Caress these swine, give us Thy grace to shun
And stamp out into death the sodomite,
Though each should slay a brother or a son!

THE MIRROR.

I see myself, and fain would gaze
While strength can yield me sight,
'Tis joy which doth my senses daze
To shine in such a light.
With stealthy glances now and then
I view my form made fair,
Than ever man may seem again
More fresh and debonair.

At once, if held by such an urn,
To ashes let me fade!
What wonder then that oft I turn
To mark my better'd shade?
The wrinkling brow, the careworn face,
Are decked in gracious dyes:
Ah, love, thy beauty gives the grace—
The mirror is thine eyes.

CRETE.

Magnificently daring Greece that hast
With one bold blow the phantom cup-and-ball
Six mighty Powers through murderous months did all

Jog fondly with a juggling caliph, cast
To the winds! *euge*, thou mightier Power, at last,
Heroic land, emergent from the pall
Which sterner ages wove and caused to fall
Athwart thy charmed, imperishable Past!

Now, may a nobler Future on thee smile,
For thou hast done what these had striven in vain
With myriad wealth and force to do—struck guile
And slaughter dead by dauntless action ta'en;
Though but from one, poor, tortur'd, turbulent isle,
Broken the bloody tyrant's cankering chain.

THE SINGING-BOY.

God heard the singing-boy and knew
Him more than mortal worth,
And bade Death go while years were few
And take the child from earth.

The singing-boy went through the fields,
And o'er the country wide,
Mailed fighting men smiled o'er their shields,
An turned their steeds aside.

In crowded market, busy street,
Wild plain, or mountain high,
His young voice, musical and sweet,
Went ringing to the sky.

Death found him wearied as he stood
Upon a dusty road

That was beside an ancient wood
Through which a river flowed.

"O come, dear singing-boy, and rest,
My lowly cot is near,
There, sleeping on my ample breast
Forget fatigue and fear."

They fleetly gained the forest hoar,
Death took his lank, lithe hand,
And led him through an open door
Into the Yonder Land.

SONG.

O woman windeth round the heart
The tendrils of her love;
The sighs that come, the tears that start,
The mildness of the dove,
These she imparteth as the sun
Flings o'er some falling stream,
In circling splendour all unwon,
Fit hues to fill a dream.

Then unto woman raise the song,
She charms our nights and days,
For her we would our youth prolong,
And wear the poet-bays:
For her we would renew our life,
Gain gold enough to wed;
For what is woman not a wife,
But woman who is dead.

BRITAIN.

What shall be sung of thee, O Land,
Planted athwart the northern seas
Thy tempest-battered cliffs command,
Scorning the buffets of the breeze!

From polar gloom to tropic glare
Thy sons yearn for that hallowed coast,
"Our Mother, dear, and sweet, and fair!"
With glistening eye in tender boast.

Thy standards greet from staff and mast
The girdling dawns of every clime;
Thy strong, terse speech hath conquering passed
Wherever human voices chime.

Thou art the peoples' proved defence,
The fastness of true Liberty,
Where Right is Might in Law and Sense,
That whoso follow shall be free.

High aims and power for high emprise
Thrill through the magic of thy name;
Thus panoplied thy children rise,
Heroic shapes, to deathless fame.

E'en durst thou fail—for faint of heart
And flecks are with thee—on the scene
Where the swift centuries fleet, thy part
Is great, and greatly played hath been.

See thou wash white thy smirched attire,
See thou renounce the shameful deed,

Lest unpermitted to aspire,
Thou grovel in the slough of greed.

Thy welded myriads' fitting laws
Be strands of Love's elastic cord
Which loops the several need, yet draws
All to one common council-board.

Thou hast marched on tho' Hope were slain,
When others faltered, led through fears;
What ocean waste, what desert plain
Daunted thy daring pioneers?

This is the tale where thou art first—
Well wrought, well won, well sacrificed;
Tho' thou hast touched the thing accurst
Yet hast thou battled for the Christ.

And consecrate art thou to win
The world for Him to ways of Peace,
And Joy and Wisdom, that the din
Of war, the rot of want may cease.

Be thou found faithful to the trust,
Crowned victor when, the struggle done
And Time a shackle in the dust,
Thou stand'st before the Glorious One.

TO GLADSTONE.

If thou hadst stooped from thy resplendent height
To grasp the tarnished hoop-and-pearl which shamed
The brows of Tennyson, and, self-defamed,

Bemired the lustrious laurels won by might
Of patience, faith, obedience to the light
Through strenuous decades, with, thus judgment-maimed,
The dog-eared tawdriness of titles, named
'Mid those who turn their victory into flight
The clearer insight of a larger day
Had named thee, reckoning thou didst weakly err,
By mock suns led inexpiably astray;
What History, now, is waiting to confer,
O Peerless, thou hadst blindly flung away—
Her grander meed of GREATEST COMMONER.

A STORY OF SPAIN.

I.

"What!" said he, "am I not worthy of thy daughter's
hand?
Than Medina know'st thou wealthier, higher in the
land?
And my love for her is purer than the air that lies
Round about the citron blossoms—deeper than the skies.
And the stone she kneels on daily at the holy shrine,
Is it not all worn with kisses? lover's kisses—mine!
She is life to me, and dearer far than aught beside;
Is her heart not mine? she loves me! why withhold my
bride?"

But the other, unpersuaded, calmly turned his eyes
On the pink-tipped citron petals, then athwart the skies.
Marked the youth with hot impatience how no sign
appeared
Acquiescent as old Gomez stroked a snowy beard.

"Gold is thine, my Lord Fernando, rank, heraldic fame;
Kings may envy thee thy lineage pure; thine ancient name.
Well do I remind thy father, true, unsullied knight,
How he fought and fell a hero, champion of the Right.
Greater 'mid ancestral greatness gloriously he sleeps;
Poets chant his praises, high the monkish requiem sweeps.
Well I know of such a father thou art worthy son;
Like renown may rest upon thee ere thy day be done.
And 'tis Isobel thou lovest; know'st thou maid more fair?
Better, sweeter, kinder, dearer, wilt thou tell me where?
As the angel-carol brought good-will and peace that night,
So her very presence brings my age a rare delight.
He who wears this gem must win her bound to my desire;
Mine in prudence to protect her; youth is fume and fire.
I who bear Time's crown of silver, look beyond To-Day,
Fain would save her care and trial, smooth the rough-rasped way.
Not for naught do men call Fortune fickle; thee she blest
Freely as a favourite, and as freely may divest!
Were thy large possessions vanished, thine since thou hadst life,
I no longer left to shield her, how would fare thy wife?"

Here the old man paused and pondered, and Fernando said
"If my riches fleet, a soldier I would be instead,
Follow where the trumpet called me, sword girt on my thigh!"
Sadly smiled the other, "And at home thy wife would die."

"I would sail the Golden Indies, rove 'mid storm and strife,
Win fresh wealth—" "But, Don Fernando, how of her thy wife?
No! and doubly no! what sheeny splendour shall not fade?
But till death thy hands will help thee; thou must learn a trade!
Then if fate should frown and lowly bend thy stately head,
Smiling calmly at misfortune thou canst earn thy bread—
Feed thy wife with food begotten by a conquered skill:
Do this, and I give my daughter, eased of future ill."

Then up started Don Fernando, blithely confident
As the sky of noon with dapples of the dawn besprent:
"Light I deem thy bidden ordeal, father mine to be!
Strong my love for thousand dangers, were it asked by thee!
This I know, that toil is holy—safe, should fortunes fail:
Craftsman, tradesman, what, I care not; love will sure prevail!
Listen, while the summer glory gilds the orange trees,
While hums on the mild susurrus of the balm-breatht breeze,
While in meads which greenly cradle lies the lake at rest,
Blue as though the azured heavens were sunk within her breast,
While the world in grace and grandeur garbed with fruits and flowers,
Like an Eden blooms before thee, joy in all her bowers;
Listen, while above the great Creator hears me now,

Sees my heart ere lips have spoken this my answering vow!
Never will I greet thy daughter, never gladly gaze
On her lovely features in a silence which is praise,
Never feel the radiant glances of her queenly eyes
Pass into mine own while sweetly soft emotions rise,
Never see the smile that thrills me to my bosom's core,
Never take her tender hand-clasp taken oft of yore—
Till I stand before thee boldly, trained to earn my bread,
Competent and trusty craftsman—mark what I have said!"

He was gone before the elder mouthed approving word,
Gone, and left them in a moment, soul to action stirr'd;
Gone for many months of toiling, while the maiden kept
In her heart his cherished image, thought of him and wept;
Thought of him when up from ocean dernly crept the night,
Thought of him when morn o'er mountains laced the dark with light,
Thought of him when Spring, the mage, shot sap, set buds a-blow,
Thought of him when wizard Winter sagged the pines with snow.

II.

Summer sunshine falls again upon the pleasant land,
By the whispering south wind, heated brows are softly fanned,
Lazy whirls move foliage depths, drop dust on thick-grassed leas,

Blowzy blossoms wanton with the thigh-deep laden bees,
Oranges half hid in emerald bending branches gem,
Purple oily olive-berries crowd each gray-leaved stem,
Bursting with its yellow ripeness hangs the heavy grain,
Clustering grapes give goodly promise for the wine of Spain.

'Neath the cool verandah, where the jasmines' deeper shade
Fell caressingly about her, sat a lovely maid;
Fixed her eyes in unseen distance, while her fingers dwell
Idly on the tuned guitar strings—it was Isobel.
"O Fernando, my Fernando, why so long away?"
Thus broke she upon the stillness of the dreamy day;
Absently again she pondered as the accents died,
Yearning with an increased yearning, and anon she sighed.
Inward thought an utterance craving, soon she touched the strings,
Waking into cadenced beauty plaintive preludings.
Then uprose her voice in music ringing near and far,
Tones which mocked the mellowed sweetness of her rare guitar:

I.

O come, my love, to me!
The sunbeams flood the valley,
Why, dear one, wilt thou dally?
Unkind to tarry yonder
From hope and faith grown fonder;
O come, my own, to me.

II.

O come my love to me!
The breezes breathe of Summer,
Where art thou, tardy comer?
The happy birds are mating,
And I am sick with waiting;
Then come, dear love, to me.

When she ceased, while yet the echoes lingered round the place,
Gomez joined his beauteous daughter, kissed her glowing face:
"I was nodding in my chamber o'er Quevedo long,
When to charm my drowséd senses floated thence thy song;
For thy voice, a living echo of thy mother's, brings
Hers again to me, and from the grave in thee she sings.
Ah! that thou didst never know her, beautiful and kind;
That she died and left thee but a baby-girl behind!
Agony, such parting hearts in mutual love attuned;
Time doth never heal but only salve an aching wound.
Yet shall severance test this love of women and of men;
Will it perish with the Now, or Last into the Then?
O, our Love has never faltered, each to each as dear,
She in God's Beyond, I yet His human creature Here.
In thy lighter trial shall Fernando prove less leal?
Dost thou doubt him?" "'Tis his absence bitterly I feel;
Doubt Fernando? doubt the Saviour helps with grace divine;
Safe I hold his heart in keeping, but—with him is mine.
With a woman's wishful wonder how I long to know
What he does—what trade may claim him—how his life doth go!

Is he now some busy armourer in Toledo town?
Doth he on a massy anvil swing the hammer down?
Doth he forge their sword-blades famous, leathern apron girt?
Are the features frank and handsome smeared with grime and dirt?
As a mason doth he deftly chisel into form
Rough unhewn blocks, rear huge buildings, work through sun and storm?
Is he skilled in curious carving? doth his cunning knife
Render frail fantastic figures counterfeits of life?
On the grainéd panel wreathen groupings fancy-wooed?
Cut the filamented fretwork for the holy rood?
Grown expert by frequent usage, gives he ample proof
Of his ableness in loom-craft, weaving warp and woof?
Doth he fabric downy velvet, or a rich array
Of soft silks and satins donned by lord and lady gay?
It may chance he is a goldsmith—shapes the precious mass
Into bracelets, brooches, crosses, charms for lad and lass;
Sets the flawless brilliants glittering high in diadems,
Over regal robes of splendour blazons costly gems.
Were the world mine, I would give it at this hour to learn
How he fares and how he labours, when he will return."

"Faith! this pretty guessing is a sport which aids not here,
Nor shall bring us nigher surety guessed we for a year.
If his chosen trade be mastered, all is then fulfilled
That a father's due concernment for thy welfare willed.
Tinker—cobbler—what, I care not, quick to give the same
Welcome warm to honest labour called by any name!"

"Tell me, father, doth this handwork need such art precise,
That to conquer, two years' toiling will not well suffice?"
"Nay, I know not; yet believe me, he will never stay
More than need enforces from thy side an hour away."

Then they spake with pleasant freedom of the many things
Perfect confidence will draw to lip from inner springs.
Time slips filled with genial converse, day begins to wane;
Evening shadows rest grotesquely lengthened on the plain.
Running straightly on before, a line of gleaming white,
Stretched long miles the highway broad till tapering out of sight.
Lo! a cloud of dust arises from beneath the feet
Of a distant laden mule train hurrying forward fleet.
While yet far, the harness buckles flash back glints of light
Caught ere lingering shafts of sunshine lose themselves in night.
Faint at first, a tinnient tremble came, then louder grew,
Clearly clinked and rang and mingled with the gathering dew.
Shaken silver-sounding mule bells rhythmically chime
Treble harmonies canorous tinkling all in time!

Coming on like moving music, mules and muleteer
To old Gomez' hacienda speedily draw near;
Pass the loose-piled wall of boulders crumbling into chalk,

Through the gate that creaked loud welcome, up the
vine-edged walk.
Now do Isobel and Gomez curiously see
Each beast is with baskets burdened, diverse as may be;
Baskets large and baskets little, baskets frail and strong,
Deep and shallow, square and oval, narrow, short, and
long.

"Baskets! buy my baskets, Señor! fair Señora, buy!"
And his craft the basketmaker busily doth ply.
Isobel starts, flushes, trembles, for the speaker's words
Thrill her as a foreripe Spring may rapture starving birds;
Strains to note him as intently o'er his work he bends;
Marks that 'tis a broken basket dexterously he mends,
How the supple withes are twisted—hears again his cry:
"Baskets! buy my baskets, Señor! fair Señora, buy!"

Soon he reaches the verandah, and dismounting there,
Quickly brings them many baskets, fain to sell his ware.
Sun-tanned, lithe of limb, and handsome—simple mule-
teer,
Judged by garb; but mien and bearing clepe him cav-
alier.
Low he bows, the sparkle hiding of a happy eye—
" Workmanship I warrant, Señor, with the best will vie."

Isobel had risen, scanned him; with a joy-lit face,
Hesitating scarce a moment, sank in his embrace
Crying wildly "My Fernando! Oh; at last! at last!"
Thus in triumph had their trial perished to the Past.

Rheumy age may slowly see, though hoary heads are
wise,
Gomez gasped "Fernando? he?" in dubitant surprise;

" Yes, it is! be praised, kind Heaven! Take her, noble son!
With a father's blessing take her, boldly, bravely won!"

"Isobel, my own, my darling! can bliss greater be
Man's, than this that thou art smiling in my arms on me?
Isobel! thy memory helped me as I strove and wrought,
And the hardest task was easy when of thee I thought.
Well I knew that toil was holy—sure, if fortune failed,
Well I knew the prize was precious—feared not, and prevailed!
Say again, tell me, my father, have I won her now?
Won her as thou bad'st me win her? have I kept my vow?"

"Ay! and as a man should win her, with thy good right hand!
Noblest basketmaker—truest noble in the land!"

They were wed, with faith the firmer, love the holier, purged
By the separation, in a perfect union merged.
Boys and girls rose fair around them, sweet petitioners
Often for the story which their father, hand in hers,
Never tired to tell, nor did the children tire to hear,
How he went a-basketmaking for their mother dear.

KHODINSKY.

O knavish Tyranny, when shall be rent
Thy yoke from necks of ox-like human souls?
Still deals the tyrant out their own in doles,

Still biding for his load their backs are bent,
Still are their servile tones in shouting spent
"A god's, no man's voice!", still these burrowing moles
In prostrate adulation pay his tolls;
So he may deign to smite them, well content!
What bounds the dictates of his insolent breath?
Must not e'en brother brother for him slay?
Starve while in luxury he walloweth?
When, blind ones, putting him and them away,
Will ye perceive his alms are ever death?
Witness Khodinsky's hecatomb for aye.

THE BRITISH HYMN.

God save the British States,
Guard our wide-open gates
Build Thou the wall;
Grant that whate'er our land
Brothers in heart as hand
United shall we stand
While Time doth call.

Britons, true Britons we
Where'er our country be
Beneath the sun:
Ind, Australasia,
Canada, Africa,
Wales, Ireland, Scotia,
England—all One!

God of our fathers hear,
In our defence be near,
To lead and aid;

Us, let no tyrant awe,
Closer together draw,
Equal before Thy law
Strong, unafraid.

Home-born or native-born,
Dyed of the dusk or morn
Dark-hued or white;
One in the inner soul,
One in true glory's roll,
One in our work and goal,
Freedom and Light.

27th January, 1896.

CATHARINE BOOTH;

On the march, 14th October, 1890.

In the pall of the fog she is borne
To her rest;
Out of darkness
To light;
Out of suffering
To balm;
Out of sorrow
To joy;
Out of warfare
To peace;
Out of London
To Christ!
O Mother, still living though dead,
O worker, O martyr, O woman of God,
Be it ours now to take up thy burthen and tread
In the steps thou hast trod!

ALL MEN.

O thou who by
Thy garret-window
Prayest,
And lookest
Into the myriad
Billioned vortices
Of worlds
Which form His footstool
Who created all,
And thus in spirit
Canst lean on them
And mounting past
Attain
His very Presence,
See to it, thou,
That thou contemn not
Those who varying
From thyself
Lean on such tinier
Things of Earth
As incense,
Ritual, rosaries,
Chasubles—they
Who were magi
Found His Christ,
Yet they
Who were ignorant
Shepherds worshipped
Led by angels—
What is't to thee
Or any

So ye come,
They by these tokens,
Thou by the stars,
To Him?

GERMAN BONDS.

"Manifestly God has protected your Majesty's precious life. I pray to the Lord to continue to hold your Majesty in His gracious and holy keeping."—(The German Emperor, Wilhelm II, to Abdul Hamid, the Sultan.)

Is it for this, O Germans, ye have wrought
Out of a hundred petty princedoms one
Imperial Realm: while every steadfast son
Held life a trust not sole but joint, nor sought
A personal but the common good, nor fought
For self but all, and bore, the toil well done,
Huge burthens, then inwreathed with palms thus won
A single House, that, now, what ages taught
Of the fell horde which grime the Golden Horn
And leave the imprint of their bloody work
Where'er they tread is by its later-born
Throned heir contemned—as through a maniac's quirk
He who should lead in Light trades God for corn,
Blaspheming flatterer of a cut-throat Turk.

ROUNDHEAD SONG.

(Before Naseby.)

Me 'mid her sons doth England call
To break the tyrant's lease,
To burst the fetter of his thrall,
To win back of his filchings all,
Rather upon the field to fall
Than Liberty should cease.
And sunnier than the ways of Peace,
And sweeter than when joys increase,
  The deadly strife will be
  If she but smile on me,
  If she I love but smile on me.

Fair are the visions which arise
Of Fame's reward for might;
But dearer than them all I prize
One glance from her approving eyes,
For in my heart her image lies;
Then sound, brave trumpet, for the fight!
The Lord, great Oliver, and Right!
To do or die her faithful knight!
  E'en death delight will be
  If she but smile on me,
  If she I love but smile on me.

DREAMS.

O years which only came to bless,
However far, however few—
Still Memory in her brightest hue
Reflects your faded happiness!

A merry boy I feel when fain
Within the pageant of a dream
I see things as they once did seem
Ere manhood's care prest on my brain.

Perhaps it is the yearning strong
That goes and flits, and flits and goes,
As thorns I grasp with ne'er a rose
To robe in joy the days too long;

Perhaps it is the wish to be
At rest, that leaves not with the light,
Which brings in visions of the night
My hazy childhood back to me.

How age-long, how breath-short since then
The time! how changed my lot, and all!
Is this—the world that still we call—
The world I lived in, and its men?

For, in the valley of my dreams,
The vale I knew in years gone by,
I hear no curse nor bitter sigh;
Fair and unmarr'd the picture seems.

And men in brothers' love are twinn'd,
And women greet with smiles the day,
Dear happy children troop to play,
While softly blows the summer wind.

Lo, Time is but a name for what,
How many soe'er the years that roll,
Can touch no token of the soul
But parcels matter jot by jot!

"HIS MAJESTY."

(*London Newspapers.*)

Grisly brand on Britannia's brow
Sports His Cut-Throat Majesty now;
Thick are corpses at Yildiz' gate,
Hecatombs if we only wait.

Empty promises, crafty lies
Gives His Majesty, Sultan-wise;
Words and writings, Marmora's waves,
Dust for Europe, death for the slaves.

Trust His Majesty, naught will fail—
Prisoners perish and widows wail;
Tortured, stabbed, and bludgeoned to death
Durst Armenians yet draw a breath?

With his bowstring on Freedom's throat
Death's their portion who sound her note;
Thus a newer walking the plank,
Swift the current, swiftly they sank!

Thus the heroine-mother's cry
"Children follow! 'Tis but to die!"
And they follow, unblenching leap
Dashed to death in the rocky deep.

He is ours, our very own man,
Out of date, on a lower plan,
Bar to Progress, cancerous blight,
Foe to Knowledge, hater of Light,

Whom, when rotted, did we replant
Grand Bashaw of our fair Levant,
Calling time for the wise-fool Giaour,
Phantom balance of phantom pow'r,

Throned by our mutual jealousies
Fears, chicane, rapacities;
Fine-spun webs of the diplomat
Hiding claws of a tiger-cat.

Sassoun to Spaghank! Civilized men
Give him respite to strike again!
Are his perjured lips than before
Worthier, smeared with innocent gore?

Who hath wrought us this Peace with Shame,
Bred such scorn of the British name
Dying victims that name have cursed
Deaf to Article Sixty-First?

Potent, then, in our sea-going might
Did we not check the Muscovite—
Nor by pact, but by shotted guns
Bind ourselves for the hapless ones?

Have we reached—as they snarl who rage
Envying us—the decadent stage?
Newer Goths at the threshold twist
Leadership from our swollen fist?

Are we sunk a degenerate race
Cringing down to a lower place?
Prompted no more by Faith and Love,
Cast aside like a mouldered glove?

Better Truth and away with hates,
Better no chain on ocean-gates,
Better concede the pious East
Manhood to spurn a Moloch-Priest;

Better than all, a new young State,
Civic nations confederate
By their sagest in sacred trust
Lifting this trampled folk from the dust.

Britons, lead on! burn out the blight!
Free these millions for Law and Light!
Moslem, Christian—follow as one!
Then, His Majesty's day is done.

Then, he goes, and in blood and flame,
Stand the need so, as erst he came;
Stand the need so, about this ghoul
Batter the walls of hoar Stamboul;

Drive him over the Dardanelles,
Force him back to his Tartar fells,
Kirghi steppes and far Aral seas,
Out of Europe and Euphrates.

TO GREECE.

Thy splendid travail shames us who allowed
Nor venged a sceptred cut-throat's bloody lust,
Sustained his blighting sway, crawled through the dust
Before three kaisers, at their bidding cowed

With British guns brave souls who sought a shroud
Rather than bear the yoke we helped to thrust
Upon them; dared no more be great or just,
Nor face for Right with God the currish crowd
We freed from the curst Corsican! Again—
Not one of Six but six in One—now play
The man, thy few like Gideon's; as he smote then
Smite thou and lead, e'en through defeat, to-day,
That this our Infamy from mortal men
Once and for ever shall be swept away!

IN THE CELL.

In the cell,
Through the seventy-five bars
Which fenced this hell,
A prisoner peered to find the stars;
Peered with bloodshot, wretched eyes
Into such shred of the solemn skies
As the curst tormenting of man
Had left free from the iron ban.
And he saw a solitary star
Throbbing steely-blue—
What but Sirius throbbing afar,
Sirius, the star he knew!
And he looked and longed and yearned
While the moments went as years,
Until the starshine burned
Back the floods of blinding tears,
Until his weary sight
Could travel along the rays,

And lead him out of the Night
Where was neither nights nor days;
And the garment of the clod
Fell from the soul, and Hope's hid tides
Again surged up: he had reached our God
And Father who abides!

In a hoarse, tremulous voice he prayed
"Father, may I still claim Thine aid,
Although my trust has been betrayed,
Though as an idiot I have played
With Time Thy gift, till all is laid
In ruin which else life's Best had made?"
And again
"Among men
Once none more free
From thoughts of guile,
Hypocrisy,
Excusing wile—
No lie upon my lips,
No theft by these poor hands.
Why was this dark eclipse?
Why stifled Thy commands?
All for nought
My crime—the gain I sought
Fled at my touch yet lured me on
Till power to return was gone;
Such fool-built, vain desires were mine!
What forced my way apart from Thine?
And in this prison, see!
Caged like a beast—denied
My manhood—not by Thee
But by my fellows' pride

Of so-called "punishment"!
Hast Thou ever lent—
Thou Who dost forgive—
To any of them that live
Thine own prerogative
Of vengeance and recompense—
To these men who primly fence
The knouted doer of sin
Legality's pale within,
From the craftier thief without
That he never feel the knout?

Remember Thou my life;
Dear God, what hath it been?
One unvarying strife
With poverty—as mean,
As drear, as foul, as unrelieved
By sunshine of success
As ever slave who toiled and grieved
Felt, as all failed to bless!—
But a few hurried days
Of freedom from the Care
Corroding all my ways
And making Being bare,
Bleak heights of thorn
And storm and anguish—stronger
Growing with the hours, until the torn
Gored feet refused to press them longer.

Ah, God, I am not carven stone!
How oft the view of gold the moan
Of Conscience chokes! I turned to tread
The path which left my Honour dead,

And gave me but these empty hands
Now stretched to Thee between these bars
While my soul trembles on the strands
Of light from this great Star of stars!

Lord God, what is man's life
Bereft of its poor own?
My children and my wife
Wait for me. They alone
Were all the joys I had;
My coming made them glad,
Their love I had from Thee;
'Twas all Thou gavedst me;
I ask not more;
With them
I am content.
But if 'tis o'er—
If my one gem—
Their love—was lent
But to be barred
From me by these grim walls,
Oh, God, it is too hard!
I can not so endure!
What "justice" that which falls
On those most true and pure?
Not Thine! not Thine!
Why, then,
Permit vindictive men
To shut me out from those who pine
For my release?
Oh, give the peace
With them who are my all
When once we had from Thee;

Though poisoned with the gall
Of Debt. If not for me,
For them whose only wrong
Is loving me! Shall strong
Men thus oppress the weak?
And churls their vengeance wreak
On these most innocent souls,
Extorting deathly tolls
Because their dearest failed,
And mired his hands, and quailed
In Penury's cold sweat
Before the tyrant Debt?
O God must all be riven,
Can I not be forgiven
By Thee though not by men?
May I enter my home again?
May I feel my Wife's embrace?
And kiss each sweet child's face?
What can it bring of good
To any, that they remain
Robbed of my fatherhood,
Adding but pain to pain?

As the snow
Covers the scarred rock o'er,
Let Thy compassion flow
Hiding life's festered sore.
All that I have abhorr'd
Yet done, hide Thou dear Lord
Who dost not judge as men—
Let me be free again!"
Then the star,
Sirius throbbing afar,

Passed beyond the seventy-fifth bar,
And its rays were reft
From the prisoned sight,
Nothing was left
To him there but Night.

He turned to the squalid bed
And under his young-gray head
The filthy pillow grew wet
With tears—he could not forget
His wife and children yet!
At last thro' deep
Sobs racking his wasted frame
He fell asleep;
And lost his burthen of shame.

For the Lord God is kind,
Though how we may not know
When we are worn and blind
With bitter woe.
Yet were He not more kind
Than they the men and women who live
But by His grace, and bind
Themselves by law to never forgive—
He were a demon and no Star
Of righteousness; a fury, no God;
No Shield, but kaiser or tzar;
Nor Love, but hates' and revenges' Rod!

And thus, the Maker of sleep
Deepened it so that death
Into an agonized heart could creep
And softlier take the breath;

And when
The prisoner smiled
To dream a loving child
Sat on his knee,
The mother mild
Weeping to see
Her husband once again—
Behold,
More precious than the whole world's gold,
From the rack of that prison
A soul had risen!

And when through factory smoke
The reeking morn had broke,
And the brutal jailers woke
The horrid echoes with stroke
Of jangling keys,
And the rusty locks creaked round,
And Disease
And Sin knew well
Another day of hell
Had come to burn and freeze,
A callous-hearted hound
Bearing a water-pan
Reached the prisoner's door
And flung it roughly back
And shouted "up!", and swore
He was always lagging and black,
And shook him and sudden found—
This wretch with the water-pan—
But the shell
Of a man
In the cell.

TO FRANCE.

I.

See, France, thine ancient foe bowed low before
Her god, Germania of the Niederwald;
By caste and kaiser hemmed; helpless to halt;
Her millions passing to the greedy store
Of Armament; the bar on every door;
Attent for thunders; tasting blood in her salt;
The eagle bearing, yet by her own clear fault
Inept for Freedom—she who so high might soar!
Shouldst thou be shaken by her dreams' alarm?
Not thine to follow but initiate!
That is thy heritage; the eternal charm
Of thee is there! Quench this barbarians' hate!
Revenge? Yea, best revenge—Disarm! Disarm!
Then shalt thou stand the Greatest 'mid the great.

11th April, 1895.

TO FRANCE.

II.

Hath, then, that vampire drained the very sense
Of Honour till the clouds of crime and lies
Of those thy bravo forger-generals rise
To blind thy Senate, stifle Innocence?
Justice is bullied dumb to impotence?

Thy lonely Bayard 'mid approving cries
Struck cowardly by a felon? murder plies
Lest Truth be heard? and, woe! the whole Land offence
Paroles?

Will the shagg'd Bruin thou cramm'st make bare
A single claw to ease thy deadliest harm?
Shall these or any whom thou hast or e'er
Canst have, loose lost Alsace-Lorraine by charm
Or foin or force from German hold? Forswear
E'en thought thereon, fond fool!—Disarm!—Disarm!

4th October, 1898.

AFTERWARD: (E. B. S.).

When beckoned clear the shipmate stars,
And whispering breezes wafted on
Our boat o'er shoals and sandy bars,
The night was lonely—thou wert gone.

And as upon the narrow deck
We stood and watched the heave-swoln sea
Fling to the harbour foam and fleck,
Thought grew a petrel flown to thee.

Then came the dawn, and wove the air
With deepening splendour; stern and prow
Blazed bathed in sun; day bloomed more fair,
Yet brought me nothing fair as thou.

Bright sparkles fired the cloven brine
When sank sweet Hesper in the west;

Her eye's mild gleam resembled thine,
And e'en the fancy hallowed rest.

When faintly shimmering through the haze
The cloud-like land appeared before,
It seemed familiar to my gaze
For thou hadst trod that stranger shore.

Thus through my voyage though thine hath long
Met shattering wreck and early end,
Thy presence fills my heart with song
And dead thou'rt deathless, O my Friend.

LOVING EYES.

How sweet to look in loving eyes,
To mark the love that in them lies,
To feel the life-blood at their fire
Kindle in friendship or desire,
To know, black brown or gray or blue,
Those eyes indissolubly true;

II.

That, man's or woman's, all we share,
Two souls made mutually bare,
Their inmost secret through the sight
Brought thrilling into tender light,
That naught in either's heart or mind
Remains untold unseen behind.

III.

Ah, woe, to look yet in those eyes
And mark the hate that in them lies,
To feel the life-blood chilling there
Before a foe's abhorrent glare,
And either soul's once open door
Impenetrable evermore.

THE CLOUD'S COMPLAINT.

A golden island when the morn had broke
From night's gray cloak
Lay trembling in the sky;
An isle of gold,
A cloud, when all is told,
A floating cloud of gold,
A floating cloudlet high.

Caught in the sun's embrace, the filmy sprite
Felt as all things may do
Full pleasure there,
Because the rare
Warm sunshine thrill'd her through,
And clad in rainbow light
Her form erst colourless.

Greeting the rays that bless
With all her grateful powers,
In sheerest love
Of the bright beams above,
She poured in the oped flowers'
Nesh cups ambrosial showers.

Thus at the dawn of day
The cloud her viewless way
Held with the flame-faced sun,
And bathed her in his rays,
His life-containing rays
Of gold and purple-grays,
Till soon,
Long ere the glory of noon,
It seemed as though she had won
All beauty of hue in air,
And, cloud no longer, become
One gem, so magnificent-fair
That the bird hung under,
Carolling wonder,
And the busy honey-bee ceased to hum,
But turned from the crystal drop
On freshened petals a-top
To look at the lovely thing which had rained it there.

When mid-day was past,
And shadows were cast
A-lengthening on hillside and dell,
Behold! it befell
That the cloud in her garb sublime
Felt the menace of flitting Time,
And lost the brightest hue
Tipping one peak of her form
With the imagery of storm
'Tween violet rain
On crimson plain
And valleys amber and blue.

Then she turned to the mighty flame
Lighting her delicate frame,
And whispered words of complaint
So feeble and fond and faint,
That not a word
Would e'er have been heard,
Had not a vibration upborne
The diffident murmur forlorn
Quick as begun,
And carried it on to the sun.

"Oh why was I made
To dwine in the shade?
My happier dreams
Are over, meseems.
My hope in thy bright
Effulgence of light
To dwell and be dight
Gone, and withdrawn the beams.
Why should not the rose
Coloured crown still repose
On me now, as of old,
When the beautiful gold
Came over the mountain, and flashed in the dale,
And far from the Earth,
Its moaning and strife,
Gave my shape in new birth
Transplendence of life—
Oh, why should that life ever fail?"

Soon as the cloud's complaint was ended,
A messenger ray from the sun descended
Bearing reply—

"I have heard thy cry,
Thy querulous cry,
Which shameth the heaven our home!
Canst thou say
What thou wert yesterday
Ere culled from the swirling foam?"

No sound from the cloud
Dusk sought to enshroud,
Her despoiled iridescence fast paling;
But again spake the ray to her wailing:
"Know, then, frail child, thou art
Of our Lord's plan a part,
Whose hand drops dew and fatness o'er the world.
Hast thou not had thy day?
Think'st thou thy fair array
Was best of that thou didst possess?
Nay! nay!
On leaf and blossom pearled,
Thy tears of gratefulness
Were grace unto the flowers;
And through hot noontide hours.
Thy form was flung in shadow that did bless
Field, fold, and dwelling-place;
He works in perfect loveliness
By Whom in beauty's dress
A blessing wast thou made.
What though of thee no trace
May see the morrow shine!
Dost thou repine,
A thing like thou, when man doth fade?

This night will every drop thou own'st be tost
Upon Earth's drouthy bosom, yet unlost
A single atom—thou shalt rise
To other uses fleet;
Lands, circling seas, and skies
In myriad guise
Will know and deem thee meet."

The old silence returned
For a time while eve burned
Into gloom, a faint-glimmering brand;
Nothing heard
But the bird
Fluttering down to her nest
And, in ceaseless unrest,
The waves' drumming boom on the sand.

Then I who had risen
Above the clay prison
In spirit, and heard
Complaint and answering word—
Troubled and weeping,
Not vainly had listened—
What secret is Nature's in keeping,
Thinking, poor fool, to surprise;
For, as darkness fell and stars above glistened,
She cried with her million-fold cries:
"The secret? the riddle that flies?
Thus much shalt thou know—God is wise!"

JUBILEE.

("300,000, *and there will be no surplus left.*" *The Times.*)

Let the bells carol, shout in perfect joy!
Extol the world-procession and cry, Hail,
O Land and People! now may ye unveil
The heart of gladness, put away the coy
Impassive mien of men who loth employ
The outward tokens of emotion; fail
Not any whit! be cheeks now flushed, now pale;
Be eyes now filled, now bright; mount, Pride! alloy
No thought with private grief; ring, thunder-cheers!—
More than because our Queen her former peers
Out-reigns, that through her daughter's rare appeal
And Lipton's princely boon, we know and feel
On this one day of all her Sixty Years
The poor of London sit to one full meal.

1897.

IN AUSTRALIA.

Progress.

O wondrous work of man who wills
A modern garb to primal birth,
Drives desert Nature from her hills,
And vanquishes the Earth.

His grasp is on the plow—he feels
Creative motion, as our God
The High Artificer reveals
Deep paths before untrod.

O wondrous work of man who stands
Predestined, patient conqueror
Of raging seas and barren sands,
Nor wages cruel war.

For by the finer arts of Peace
All things are brought to own his hand,
And Time a hostage to increase
True Progress wisely planned.

IN AUSTRALIA.

Their Christmas.

Christmas again! let us greet it
In our Australian way:
Wisely and cheerily meet it,
Season of earned holiday;
Season of rest and thanksgiving,
Season of worship and mirth,
Season which proves life worth living
Here on the new side of Earth.

Rather with us than the olden
World is the time gladly born—
Here where our Christmas is golden
With the ripe, wind-rustled corn;
Harvest has come or is coming,
Through the wide sections of wheat
Hark, how the strippers are humming,
Never was music more sweet!

Christmas! and almond and vine press
Green in the midsummer glow;
Soon running over the wine-press
Nectared grape-juices will flow;
Christmas! when stars e'en the night time
Make by their prodigal ray
Poured through clear skies but a bright time,
A shadowless dream of the day.

Hither we welcome no alien
Fitter for Europe's dull air,
It is our own, our Australian
Christmas, loved, jocund, and fair!
No cruel winter hath nipt us—
Banned from our beautiful clime;
Under the high eucalyptus
Hold we our festival time.

Far ring our loud salutations;
True fellow-colonists we!
Folk of all customs and nations,
One in the Nation to be.
Hail, then, the lovely tradition,
Peace and good-will among men;
Blessing and blest in its mission,
Christmas is with us again!

IN AUSTRALIA.

To England.

Old England! what may poet sing
Above the beauty of thy name?

First in my love as last—'tis Spring
Unto my soul; thy deathless fame
My Summer: all that she can bring;
As though my very blood did ring
Thy glories thrill the inmost heart;
Be what thou wilt, thou hast thy part
Of righted wrongs, of goodness done
As few may have beneath the sun;
Here, in the burning zone of Earth,
To thee I turn, land of my birth;
England!

All men are nobler for the sense
Thou lendest them of Liberty.
This is the peoples' firm defense,
This is the light by which they see
The fraud of tyrants' high pretence;
And yearn, thus lighted, to erase
The mean, the evil, and the base;
Till Right is Might, and following thee
All nations under Heaven are free,
England!

Shake off the vile, dishonouring thrall
Thy statesmen's littleness would bind;
Still let thy children's children all
Be Englishmen, where'er they find
A home; then shalt thou never fall
'Mid those thou scorn'st to hold thy peers,
Nor hark the voice of teeming years,
"Sons, daughters, ten new Englands—these,
O Mother, driven from thy knees,
England!"

IN AUSTRALIA.

Moonshine Song.

The wrinkled moon rose late at night,
Her golden haze slid slowly down
And wrapt the vales in creamy light,
And swathed the hills from base to crown.

Orion hurried to the west,
The Pleiads led him on his way,
For dimness fancifully drest
In moonshine, aped the unborn day.

The clouds which floated white and high
Grew chill within the moony glaze:
They dreamt of warm delight gone by,
And waited for the morning blaze.

The trees beneath the sallow moon,
Mixed in the shade their branches threw;
They wondered what was done with noon,
And if it hid within the dew.

The cock, awaking by mischance,
Thought dawn had come, and tuned his throat;
Then seeing moonbeam motes a-dance,
Dozed off in muffling up the note.

E'en tiny stars with moon-blurr'd rays,
Forgot their shining overheard;
And sharing in the common maze,
I bundled home, and went to bed.

IN AUSTRALIA.

Port Victor.

Across the beach we watched the foam
And saw the waters rise
As if to drag us to their home
And drown the very skies;

Then threatening on with hissing crest
They thundered through the tide—
Behind Port Victor in the west
Day's happy sunshine died.

Fraught seemed the waves with awful doom
When, in a moment, they
Curled over with a sullen boom
And scattered into spray.

Oft, looking forward, thus we read
Misfortune ne'er designed,
And agonize ourselves and bleed
From wounds made by the mind.

Those troubles menace, this will crush,
We can not, surely, beat
The storm back whose relentless rush
Spoils life of what's most sweet.

At length we face long-dreaded ends
Undaunted as we may,
And, lo! o'ercome or found as friends
They scatter into spray.

IN AUSTRALIA.

*Wattle Bloom.

The pink-eyed almond blossom threw
Its petalled drifts of white,
To the young grass a lighter dew
Clung through the fresh Spring night,
Gay wattle bloom hid blade-like leaves,
The earth, now smiles now tears,
Brought promises of garnered sheaves
And long Australian years.

'Twas August, and I saw the birds
Dart through the sunset glow,
And heard her sing some simple words
Whose tune too well I know;
She held a bough of wattle bloom
And said "If Death divine
Should take me first, let o'er my tomb
Their yellow glory shine."

Then, with her sweet adventure done
Our childless home was thrilled;
She smiled a mother with her one
Great hope of Life fulfilled;
I sat and held her dear, thin hand
And watched her patient eyes
Turn where the wattle bloom was fann'd
By winds more soft than sighs.

*A species of Mimosa, called "silver wattle" by the colonists. In August it bears racemes of yellow flowers which make the air odorous for some distance round the tree. The leaves are stiff, and in shape resemble small blades or scimetars.

'Tis August, and above my head
The fragrant branches wave,
But underfoot, the lovely dead
Lie in their happy grave;
She sleeps, the baby on her breast,
Nor lonely in the gloom,
For shining o'er their folden rest
Droops yellow wattle bloom.

IN AUSTRALIA.

The Unjust Judge.

High on the judgment-seat he sits
A rascal shielded by his place,
True Justice scorns his tinsel wits
And hates his brazen face.

At once the perjurer's tool and friend,
A counsel if spite thus have vent,
Learn'd in the quibbles which defend
The thief from punishment.

Cursed underbreath by those he robs,
Detested through a hundred towns;
A jovial fellow, he hob-nobs
With clerics as with clowns.

Men may not openly proclaim
His deeds, for precedent declares
Fine and imprisonment and shame
The hire of him who dares.

So let him flourish propt by Law
Till tolerant peoples thrust aside
The foul pretence of sovran awe
Which wraps a tiger's hide.

So let him flourish till he rot
Like poisoned carrion, done his day,
And if the Present scorch him not
God grant the Future may.

IN AUSTRALIA.

Vale, Salve.

No valediction for the old,
No welcome for this newest year;
Dreaded the tale before 'tis told—
Once, doubly dear.

Naught but the sterile, desert glooms
Of failure mark the Past. To-Day,
Naught but a sterile desert looms
My future way.

I can not cheat myself that Hope
Is mine as long she used to be;
And feebler grows e'en wish to cope
With obloquy.

So easy is it e'er to yield,
So sure an opiate is Despair—
Let others come and plow the field,
For me 'tis bare.

They lie who say such things as chance
And luck make men and women fail—
I know they lie—and drop my lance,
And doff my mail

Sure as of old the venal powers
Crowd where we struggling mortals press
And guard their favourites—charm the hours
To only bless—

Beat thousands back, and blindly thrust
Success on souls that well we deem
But fit for crawling in the dust—
Or do I dream?

Are they recipient who deserve?
Do those whom Fortune crowns as blest
Beyond their fellows, never swerve
From high behest?

Are there no cheats who occupy
The chair of office? is the hill
Mounted by merit? do none buy
The place they fill?

Are those who toil with honest hands
Those who pre-eminently hold
The influence bred of spreading lands
And piled-up gold?

Are politicians clean again?
Do they no longer upward climb
Through Parliament o'er better men,
Hoodwinking Time?

What is their right who sit above?
Self-chosen? or our choice because
Untarnished, virtuous, fired with love
Of noble laws?

Do they judge Justice to be chief,
And Truth her essence? and no day
Lend to the formal, perjuring thief
An equal sway?

If this be so, then all is well;
I have no claim to scorn the year
Departed to the nether hell
Of loss and fear.

If so it be, and this young land
Is free from gray, conventional death
Of Right and Honour, I may stand
And draw new breath,

And hope again, and hold life dear,
And know my folly cause of fall,
And bless the Father and His year
Now born for all.

IN AUSTRALIA.

Her Majesty's Mails.

(*Australianese.*)

The Surder an 'ero? Oh, *he* ain't no fool,
He worked up the Nile, give them dervishes gru'l,
An' smashed the Kurleefer to rights; but, d'y' see,

He ain't quite the cheese that means 'ero to *me*,
Becoz, after all, *other* men are in front,
An' do the reel ding-dong, an' bear all the brunt.
They couldn't without 'im? Well, p'r'aps may be so—
But *I* laike a man as knows well haow to go
On his aown blessed 'ook, an' w'en his work's done
Has done something *useful*—not *that* kind o' fun—
We don't care for it *here*. I say, you've met Jim
Before—Jim Jennings the Mailman? No? That's him
A-driging this coach—small—thin—one shoulder drooped
With holding them reins and through bein' allus cooped
Up askew on the box—these teams abaout pull
A man's arms out o' joint. Well, there was a mull
Made somehow at Cobar, and not a fresh horse
Could be caught when Jim come by love or by force.
The ostler got drunk, and the nags with a rush
Had bust from the stable and took to the bush—
So here was a pickle—for Jim 'ad to ride
With mailbags bang forrud to Louth t' other side;
A sixty-mile stretch through a desert of sand,
Not a vestige of green as big as your hand.
I'm Australian born, and just thirty-five,
But, mister, no, never since I've been alive
Was there such weather knaown. 'Twas that blazin' hot
That w'en my ol' wamman took hold o' the pot
To make tea, she left on its handle the skin
Of the top of her thumb and two fingers! In
The shade or the sun blest if 'twasn't the same—
The whole country ready to break aout in flame,
While the heat from the graound shot sparks in your eye
Till you dursn't look daown. The birds flew to die
On the trough in search of a drink, and, of course,
Jim was fixed up proper for want of a horse,

The tits he had drove there were shockingly done,
An' he then was full two hours late, for he'd run
Slap into a stump, an' the haxle got broke
An' 'ad to be tied, an' the cord was all smoke—
That hot was the iron! So here he was—stuck,
With a good heavy mail—two bags. "Well, ol' buck,"
Says Dawson the publican; "What 'ull you do?"
"Do?", Jim says; "Go on, to be sure—just a few!"
And Dawson he gaped with his beery-eyed stare,
While Jim had the near-leader saddled—a mare;
An' slung the two mailbags see-saw on each side,
An' dusty an' 'ungry set aout on his ride.
My Gord! what a day was that Thursday! A gun
I'd left loaded aoutside was fired by the sun—
The breach got so warm! Well, Jim Jennings rode off
On the mare with them bags, a-trying to scoff
Some tucker Bill Dawson had given him, and soon
Went aout o' sight—mighty rough on the poor coon!
He knew well enough that there wasn't a drop
Of water between—so 'twas push on or stop
Till bleached. He roused up the mare, which, though
a brute,
Was better than many a psalm-smite galoot!
A nuggety beast—I remember her well—
She needed no whip, never asked for a spell—
Now, willing as ever, she answered his call,
Her level best doing, a pattern to all.
The sun set at last—dark a wee bit, then soon,
A great, red-hot frying-pan, up rose the moon.
The wind was no cooler and blew like the deuce—
The mare's legs got shaky, Jim knew 'twas no use
To keep on that night. He dismounted and walked,
And led her, and patted her neck, and just talked,

And swore at the fix, as if she'd been a friend—
But, Lord, he could see she was most nigh the end
Of her tether, and had to spell her a while
Begrudging the minutes that lost him a mile.
Well, Friday was hotter than Thursday! The sun
Whizzed up in Jim's face, and new torture begun.
The mare at first starting had put on a pace,
Like the jewel she was in saddle or trace,
But pretty quick slackened, and soon was dead beat;
Jim felt her brave heart pumping under his seat.
And jumped off to ease her. He coaxed her along
For a mile or two more, and hummed her a song
In a strange, broken voice—his throat was that dry
It rattled and hurt him. The sun getting high,
Poured daown such a heat that his head seemed to swell
As big as a maounten'; and right aout of hell—
Thereabaouts—blew the smothering wind. Just where
The sand was the deepest, the plucky old mare
Shook on her pins—caved in—fell slump on one side—
Before Jim could take orf the saddle—had died!
Yes, there his companion lay dead as a stone,
And thirty good miles to be covered. Alone
In that burning desert Jim, choking for breath,
Sunk daown by her side who'd been true to the death,
Then started to walk it, but back orfen cast
His glance on the animal game to the last.
He trudged along up to his ankles in sand,
The sun sometimes blistering the back of 'is 'and,
And so over-baked with the heat and the drouth,
His tongue rasped against the inside of his mouth
As dry as a bone and as black as your hat;
While, if he looked up, he grew blind as a bat,
The glare was that fearful! But, spurting a lot,

He made some five miles, then stopped short as if shot,
Letting aout with a groan, and biting his nails,
"My Gord! I've forgotten Her Majesty's mails!"
He'd left the two bags by the mare!
It meant back
Five miles—and five more on that terrible track.
No shirking with Jim, he turned straight away there,
And dragged the two mail bags from under the mare.
Her Majesty's mails! Bet y' few bigger men
Would have shouldered them bags—and pushed on again!
But his duty a'course—and that's what he thought
As over each inch of the desert he fought,
His feet getting skinned and his eyes in a mist—
His blood on the boil, he could hear as it hissed,
Sizzling up past his ears to surge in his head—
He stuck to Her Majesty's mails—as *'e* said—
Like a donkey with panniers, one slung each side—
All that day, all that night; some hours mooching wide
Of the track after creeks which seemed to flow near
Full of water—in fact, Jim got dreadful queer
And crooked, and fainty, an' somehow fell daown
With Her Majesty's mails raound his neck done braown.

He never could tell how long *that* time might be,
But rousing up sharp know's he's under a tree,
And wonders whatever has brought the mails there,
And why he's afoot, and what's wrong with the mare?
Conundrums like these Jim soon felt weren't the thing;
But as he's not equal to luggage, he'll sling
Her Majesty's mails in the tree—which he did;
And tramped it again with no need of a skid.
By George, he *was* glad when the sunset come raound,

Like a broken-backed snake he crawled on the graound.
Some freshly-spread road-metal gashed up one hand
And scraped his knees badly—Jim knew that the sand
Was gone—he was nearing the township at last!
How slowly the white-painted milestones were passed!
He pulled himself on, bleedin' naow from the cuts,
An' got into dust lying deep in the ruts
Quite coopered.
That moment—but faint—horses' feet
Seemed to sound far away. No music so sweet
Had Jim ever heard. Quick he shoves daown 'is 'ead
To lissen. Yes! no mistake! Then came a dread:
He'd left Jane (the Missis) in rather a fix,
An' no cash in the house for her's or for Dick's
(Dick's his child) bit of mourning—ah, if he slid
Who'd fetch lolly home for the poor little kid!
Next, he felt himself going asleep, 'coz he must.

When he woke-like, a buggy and pair had just
Got close up, and the horses, seeing Jim, shied;
Then the driver jumps aout and stoops alongside.
"Who the devil are *you*?", says the chap, "What ails?"
Croaks Jim: "Up a tree with Her Majesty's mails!",
And fell back delirious, and stopped so a week,
Nor isn't right yet. 'Twas a damned narrow squeak!
Did they get the bags? Rather! Jim tied 'em so
As rats couldn't fetch 'em, or wind shake 'em low.
What reward did he pocket? Well, nothing great—
I think they forgave him the fine for bein' late.
The Surder deserves a fat cut off the joint,
And so does Jim Jennings—but *that's* not the point.

IN AUSTRALIA.

The Commonwealth.

As 'mid a folk betrayed some gracious Plan
Which Boldness and Discretion both commend
To widen civic ways, and make an end
Of gross disablement and selfish ban
Of larger air and greater good to man
By suffered Privilege,
being tried, will spend
Itself to crush one monstrous Wrong, then bend—
As 'twere a stream sucked in the sand—through span
Of Time effectless, for that those who led
Grew blind or false,
yet lives in noble stealth,
To rise more heavenly-potent when is fled
The trammeling dark, and stand in federal Health
And Light expanding with the centuries' tread—

So risen, advance! O herald Commonwealth.

YESTERDAY.

"Yesterday," my father said,
"I stood, a bairn of three,
And saw my baby-brother's head
Sponged on his nurse's knee."

White and thin my father's hair,
Deep wrinkles grooved his face,
Long parted with the seasons were
That dealt him youthful grace.

"Yesterday?" "Ay, Yesterday;
And in my four-brick trap
I caught a gaudy-feathered jay
And ran, a little chap

"Smaller than yourself, to take
My prize—and let it slip
Through flurrying fingers, whirring make
For a tall pear-tree's tip.

"Then I watch my mother close
Her bonnet-strings, and view
And wonder how her peerless nose
The glass dare set askew.

"Thirty, forty years may go,
You to your child will say
'I saw such things, did so-and-so,
A boy, but Yesterday.'

"Larger Life than this we live
Shall years which veil deny?
Ah, no, thank God! for thus we give
To vapouring Time the lie."

ENGLAND'S GREATNESS.

What paeans of England's greatness and her gold
Are dinned in this world's ear! how she hath won
Wide "Empire"; how to her Wealth's rivers run;
How Commerce is her slave; how multifold
Her manufactures; how since times of old

She rules the waves; how of past nations none
Such greatness wore! Unto the setting sun
Is there not splendour upon splendour rolled,
Which are God's warning glories of the air
That Night must fall ere a new day begin?
Shall, England, thine be trappings tawdry-fair,
Mere sign of darkness and decay within?
Too great thou art! for greater never were
In Drunkenness, in Poverty, and Sin.

SHE SHINES UPON ME.

She shines upon me like a star
Which, while the heavens are black with night,
Breaks through some cloud-rift from afar,
And glows and gives its cheering light.

She shines upon me like a star,
Serenely bright, or sun or shade
The steadfast ray no bane may bar,
The fulgent splendour ne'er doth fade.

She shines upon me like a star,
Still shining on through time and wrack;
Should wrong entice and seek to jar
The twinéd cord, she calls me back!

She shines upon me like a star
Which beams and brightens while I pray
No chance may change, no memory mar
Our love that grows with every day.

NIMMER ZURUCK.

I do not come back,
Thy guard is too slack,
Thy prudence too blind,
Thy smiles are too kind,
Thy hand is too soft,
Thy glances too oft
Are flashing my way—
They pierce me and sway,
Thine eyes are too black,
Thy lips are too red,
Too near me thy head,
Thy voice too divine;
Thy lovely life's track
Should I intertwine
Were coupled with wrack,
Spilled all the clear wine
Of Joy's fecund vine;
There's naught thou dost lack
To charm all of mine—
Retain what is thine;
I do not come back.

DISCIPLESHIP.

Their tongues be frozen who would regulate
The world and all To-Day by the dry saw
Of some dead dogmatist, and caw his caw,
Re-bray the petty pribbles of his pate,
Decipher his crabbed scratchings on a slate
As though the musty fudge were Natural Law

And Time were locked in his decrepid paw
And he had gauged the Future and was 'Fate'!
Thus may we never more play Cromwell's part
And strangling fingers wrench from subjects' throats
But, patting tumid paunch—once, valiant heart!—
Croak, masters of the mightiest fleet that floats,
"'Unjustifiable war, to end their smart'—
Climb down (good phrase!)—great Hogge, the Premier quotes".

THREEFOLD.

What is the cry of the World,
Writ on its banner unfurled,
Borne by the living and dead,
Open and flung to the skies,
Blazoned by groaning and sighs
That the grim words may be read
By God and the angels o'erhead?
Poverty! Hunger! Poverty! Hunger!
That is the cry of the World.

What is the cry of the Age,
Wailed by the fool as the sage
Out of the heart-break and moil
Sprung from the joy-barren land
Stretching in deserts of sand
Yielding to effort no spoil
But folly and failure and toil?
Poverty! Hunger! Poverty! Hunger!
That is the cry of the Age.

What is the cry of this Life,
Husband, or children, or wife,
Naught theirs on Earth of her best,
Breathing because that they must—
Choked with their sobs and her dust,
Glad to sink back on her breast,
Glad, if to die mean to rest?
Poverty! Hunger! Poverty! Hunger!
That is the cry of this Life;
Poverty! Hunger! Poverty! Hunger!
That is the cry of the Age;
Poverty! Hunger! Poverty! Hunger!
That is the cry of the World.

WITH THEE IS TO-MORROW.

Creator and King
With Thee is To-Morrow;
Thou only canst bring,
We only can borrow;
Thou only dost live,
Thou only canst give,
With Thee is To-Morrow;
For we are but naught
And we have not aught
But hunger and sorrow,
But sin and its chain,
But folly and pain,
But dust and the ages,
But Earth and its wages;
And puny and vain
We wander in night

And stumble enticed,
Shamed, wretched, adrift,
Unpitied, unpriced—
But Thou art all Light,
But Thou art all Gift;
Thou hast given us Thy Christ;
If we will but borrow,
To Thyself Thou wouldst lift
Us, hunger, and sorrow;
With Thee is To-Morrow.

IN THE CITY.

In the city,
Down a swarming street,
At the cool night's busiest hour,
Thrilled with love and pity,
A poet passed along,
Bearing in his hand a flower
Exhaling odour sweet;
And the air around him beat
The melody of song.

He thought of the dear wife
Who had plucked the flower, as dew
Fell and the stars began to shine
On the garden of his home anew:
"Thank Heaven that home is mine!
Thank Heaven for my life!"

As the praise came half aloud,
Winged from the heart's close bower,

Through his lips, and the debt
Of Love made him rejoice,
A strumpet in the crowd
Flaunting, stopped, and met
Him, and pled in her raucous voice
"My dear, give me that flower!"
Seeming to crave it.

Gently he gave it,
Pained with compassion, knowing well
The fierce insistent hell
Whose coals her torn feet ever trod;
And she smelt the flower, and cried "My God!
This is the flower I used to curl
And twine about my hair
When a tiny girl,
And my days were fair,
And my mother smiled
In pride of her child—
I was a child once! And this flower
Oh, what is its power?"

And she burst into floods of weeping
And kissed the flower, and, keeping
It near her brandy-bleared eyes,
Silenced by shattering surprise,
Went back to her filthy den.

And one of the fouler men
By whom her soul was drowned
In sin, and honour made jest,
Rose up from the reek
Of his orgies and found

Her stone-dead
On the bed,
And the trail of those tears
Wet still in the paint on her cheek;
With the poet's flower on her breast,
Past trouble, past pity,
Past turbulent years,
And at rest
In the City.

GERMAN ARMS.

When brow-to-chin-creased Moltke throttled Gaul
With Bismarck's Teuton-Titan docile bent
To work that master-strategist content,
Was not the astounding triumph more than all
Since brave Arminius brake the Roman wall
By German Arms brought to accomplishment—
This, that for Germany from France hath rent
Milliards and provinces?
Yea, did befall
Thereto that these for France wrought better things:
Drove the last emperor from her burthened sod,
Freed her for ever from the clutch of kings,
Made clear the path where late her sons have trod
'Neath ordered Liberty's calm-folded wings—
Beyond the dreams of men the deeds of God!

A NOCTURN.

Where is my love who slumbered
While the full moon whitened the street,
When through her window came music
Upborne in melody sweet.

Where is my love who wakened
When the music crept to her brain,
And made the still midnight quiver,
And held her heart in the strain.

Where is my love who lifted
The blind with her ivory hand,
To see One whiter than moonlight
A-playing before her stand.

Playing his harp of beryl
Which swelled with glitter and glare
And dimmed the moonbeams and lent her
Ineffable glory there.

Where is my love who listened
And leaned to the stranger soul,
And saw him harping his music,
And heard his harmonies roll.

Where is my love who followed
His music piercing the sky,
And vanished from earth and women,
Nor giving Regret a sigh?

Where is the One who drew her?
And where is the strain she heard?

Nothing I hear of that music
From brook, or forest, or bird.

Where is the land contains it?
The ocean, or sky's blue dome?
That harper was more than human,
And dwells in a far-off home.

THE SONG OF THE POET.

The poet sang of a golden time,
In the golden sunlight standing,
When the world was young, in the olden time,
And the people heard his melodies chime
Their tones with the echoes banding;
Men listened rapt as he struck the strings,
And women wept at their whisperings,
But the Poet stood in that olden time
While the drones were drowsily humming,
In Eld's perfect summer, the fair golden prime,
And sang of the time that was coming.

Then winter came, and the world grew old
With a selfish wisdom darkened,
But the poet rose and yet sweet as bold
In a deepened tone his melody rolled,
The angels bent low and harkened;
Men would not listen and hurried past,
For snows fell thick in a biting blast,
And the women heard but to mock afar,
Or to scoff "The singer is mumming!"
But loud pealed that song like a rune from a star,
And carolled the time that was coming.

With Earth's free guerdon of Age and Care
Is the poet still a-singing,
Though his hands are empty, his limbs half-bare,
Yet his heart's aflame despising despair,
His voice a clarion ringing;
Men give for largess the rankling jeer,
And women shut both the soul and ear;
They will cry "Why babble these foolish things?
Now forbear thy vagabond strumming!",
But facing the Master Who taught him he sings
The Song of the Time that is Coming.

"THINE ARE MINE."

From Childhood tender
Through manly splendour
To life's surrender
Thou Love Divine;
Thou meek and lowly
Dear Saviour holy,
For aye and wholly
Let us be Thine.

O sweet indwelling
All bliss excelling,
Beyond our telling
Thou Love Divine;
Through Joy's emotion,
Through Sorrow's ocean,
Through Faith's devotion
Let us be Thine.

Through Conscience pealing,
In Thought and Feeling
Thyself revealing
Thou Love Divine;
In Time and Trial,
Through Doubt's denial
To Heaven's espial
Let us be Thine.

Death and the Devil gambled for my soul
While I stood looking impotently on—
And for what trifling value had they staked it!
I shook with fear—was it decreed on high
That, after all, one of these two would win me?
A hand came through between and snatched my soul
Away—a hand all deeply scarred as though
A nail had sometime pierced it. Then, I knew.

LABOUR.

"All ye are brethren," said the Christ, and though
Scorn capped the ages, is this age compelled
To own He knew, Who spake no lie and held
The key of ours as those of long ago,
Foreseeing how the patient drudge ground low
Beneath the iron yoke himself would weld—
Kept doltish, drunken, servile, blinded, celled—
One day would waken into knowledge, throw
Aside his fetters, clench his giant fist,
Uprear his toil-stooped bulk, grown well aware
The whole world but his anvil, use, then twist

His brute-impulsions to accord with fair
Designs of Law and Love, self-won insist
"Give me my brotherhood's portion, thy co-heir!"
1893.

DAGMAR'S CROSS

How the Cross was found.

Fierce Ottocar the King had one fair child,
'Mid his fair realm's fair women the shining pearl,
For not alone the roses, shamed to vie
The bloom upon her cheek, blushed ruddier depths
Though vainly wher she passed, and bending ferns
Strove enviously to catch the rounded lines
Which graced her lissom form; while rippling beck
Raved babbling on, because her laughter rang
In sweeter, clearer sounds; and, drawn from high
The sunbeams deemed that all the heavenly blue
Lay clustered in her eyes, and hid themselves
Within the meshes of her silky hair,
But, happy maiden! outward comeliness
Was matched by surer beauty of the mind.

A princess born, no humble peasant girl
Held lowlier due estate of womanhood.
Deep in her soul had sunk the Christ's command
That we should love each other as ourselves,
And made her doubly royal by the right
She claimed and used to succour the distressed,
To fend with woof of tenderest charity
Most delicately woven, the snows of life,
Thick-falling ever, from the Father's poor.

L. of C.

This was the maid who left her Böhmer sire
Sweetly obedient to his politic will,
Bearing the freight of eighteen happy years,
And sailed athwart the sea to be the Queen
Of Valdemar the Victor, Denmark's king.

Then when she gained old Ribé, all the land
Burst into flame of welcome, and the folk
Wrapt up their love and worship in a word—
Dagmar, Gem of the Day, Joy of the Danes,
Brightest and purest of the things which are—
All this and more that word for them contained.

Ay! but a fisher fishing through the night,
Heard sounds of woe, and saw a merman rise
Green-bearded from the brine, and sobbing wail
"The blossoms die when that the fruit hath come!
So, Dagmar! Dagmar!" More was uttered then
Not meant for human kenning, which scream-like passed,
And pierced the darkness, flying far along,
While the wan creature sadly sank to rest.

What year had e'er a day like that which broke
And reigned and dwined in joy when Valdemar
And Dagmar wedded? Then, as though the bells
Had shaken down the light in jewel-rain
The dew-drop shimmered trembling on the flowers
Whose odorous breath updrawn to lattices
That fenced the bridal-chamber, drifted through
And mingled in the maze of honeyed dreams.

Morn, silver-sandalled, stole upon the hills,
Mantled till grown to noon's magnificence,

Where by his girl-queen lingering, Valdemar
Spake in the custom of a fleeted age
"What shall I give thee for a morning-gift,
Rose of the world, who gave thyself to me?"
Full oft strong men shun deeds weak women dare,
And such a deed her answer:
"O, my King,
My husband! what am I to urge a boon
Of thee, although thy generous lips provoke
The asking? Love, hast thou not raised me up
To sit beside thee on thy splendid throne?
Hast thou not made me Queen? can human hand
Give human heart a fairer bounty? Yea,
If it may be, doubt not my morning-gift
Shall bind thy brow with laurels more sublime
Than any wreathed by gauntleted Victory.
Thy look emboldens me—that thou would'st loose
The prisoners fettered here because they fought thee,
And lift the plow-tax from thy patient hinds—
Thus, in these things, I crave my morning-gift."
Her earnest face and ardent tones made bold
Appeal for those locked lips and stifled hearts;
Yet had she spoken vainly. Valdemar,
Surprised, loath to deny, thrilled by the grace
Which winged her words, gave answer—"Dagmar, mine,
Fitly our Danes count thee their chiefest joy!
Myself miswrought in purpose do I deem
Because affairs of State and Government
Are heedless to the music of thy prayer.
How could thy eighteen sunny summers tell
Of cares which wrinkle royal brows, or how
Inform thy mind what reasons may compel

Chains on an enemy, tribute from friends?
This I remember and am comforted."
Here, quick to guess his meaning did she cry
"If not for Dagmar's love, for love of Christ!"
"For love of Christ I raised my banner oft
Where savage tribes deride the Sacred Name,
Till they who scoffed have humbly bowed before
The Gospel of the Cross my bishops brought.
In coming years be mine the appointed work!
Yet shalt thou own a use for prisoners
Nor marvel at a tax while war is nigh.
What! queen of queens! shall I not smite afresh,
And prove 'the Victor' is no titular dust,
But very essence of the days that are?
If Dagmar bid, the things she asketh now—
A girlish whim—are all I would not do.
Dear love, thy morning-gift, I swear, shall be
Far worthier both than that thy fancy seeks.",
And ending lightly with a kiss, went out
To grant his knights a waited audience.

Pilgrims affirmed that Eastern convents held
A cross of cunning workmanship, wherein
Was hid one lock of our Lord's hair, which John
Had taken when they left Him in the tomb.

"Meet morning-gift for Dagmar," held the king,
And to the Syrian shore despatched the man
Of all most trusted, holy Anders, charged
Through speediest ways to find the wonder, buy,
And bring to Denmark though the cost outweighed
The tenfold contents of his treasury.

Scarce gone the ship when Andrew, named the Good,
Of Lund archbishop, came in pious wrath
Hotly complaining his evangelists
Cast, faithful witnesses, 'mid human swine,
By base Livonians had been sacrificed
To heathen idols; and the Christ reviled.
Whereat the king flashed forth his mighty brand—
No mere word-fighter he—and sware an oath
By Him the Crucified, these churls their crime
Should rue, and through a sea of blood should swim
To him for grace, but find it not, and form
Their filthy gods into a funeral pyre,
Themselves the living human holocaust.

Then, knowing Denmark's men would follow him
Across the East Sea to Livonia, drave
His captive thousands to the southern bound,
There to burn lime, delve clay, and fashion bricks,
Toil at the dawn and on into the night,
Under command of trusty overseers,
In labour of defence to build a high,
Broad, turreted dividing wall 'neath which
His lieges, thus the nearer foe outbarred,
While he was absent might in safety sleep.

Then, tarrying fretfully till Anders' quest
Should place the amel'd cross within his palm,
A royal lion compassed with the net
Of uneventful hours and loathèd ease,
Nor sport, nor jest, nor Dagmar's love weighed worth
To the king one deep breath drawn where clashing hosts
Contended in the sounding field of war.

Meanwhile the ship with holy Anders fraught
Plowed through strange seas her closing furrow and yawed
Past sentry capes of misty continents.
Thrust from her track by tempests, next becalmed,
Thwarted by wayward currents and unknown tides,
In vain Sten Thorgysson, her master, proved
His art an admiral's; weeks dragged on to months;
The weary voyage grew an imprisonment
Until a gladdening foam-flower, herald bright,
A loop of blood-red seaweed floated by,
Which seen, the sailors' joy rose from dry throats
In husky cheering that their pains were o'er.
But Anders lifted up his face to God
And gave Him thanks that thus far on the way
His guiding providence had safely brought
Through dangers manifold; for what remained,
He asked the Eternal's all-sufficing aid,
Within the hollow of Whose hand upheld
Lie earth and ocean, sun and firmament.
Bowed head, bent knee, did the rough mariners,
Now smote with silence, listen to the praise
And grateful prayer; and when—a swift-spun sequel—
The sacred coast was won, their craft safe hauled,
With reverent grief and wishes for the best,
They parted from the humble man of Christ,
Who on his errand sallying took his way
From Joppa's haven toward Jerusalem,
There in safe-keeping lodged his golden bars,
And after keen inquiry, in keener search
Sifted the country, that no fault of his
Might miss the precious thing for Valdemar.

Old convents, churches, sacred shrines, alike
Bore witness of his zeal, but vainly oped
Their gates to bid him welcome or God-speed
From Dan to Beërsheba; pious men
Pent by their vows in gray-walled monachism
Peered amid coffer'd relics for the cross,
And nothing gained concerning but a tale
How John the apostle gave that holy tress
To Gaïos who dying, kindly heart!
Bequeathed which house of God should poorest be
The peerless treasure, yet the house itself
Was nameless on the yellow palimpsest.
Withal, the legend told how hurrying time
Slipt by ere, to preserve the gift, a cross
Was at Byzantium wrought of hammered gold
In hollow halves, the enshrining husk bedecked
With the Christ's image, Mary's and high saints'.

This gladdened Anders, and dispelled a fear
Spawned in his brain by failure, that despite
The pilgrim-story, such memorial
Of our dear Lord had ne'er been left behind.
Then carrying forth a rheum-eyed prior's pass
Traced in crabbed cypher, potent to ensure
Respect and welcome from pale monks afar,
He toiled beyond the deep Dead Sea to where
Arabia's naked crags watch burning wastes,
And gained the convent of Saint Catherine,
Builded on Israel's thunder-guarded mount.
Here the good fathers' care demanded first
Inspection of the franking manuscript,
And from their crenelated pile they lower'd
A cord whereunto it was tightly lashed,

Swung twisting in the air or struck the wall,
As by a creaking windlass upward drawn
But, read, dissolved all doubt, and enterance there
For Anders quickly made. The journey's hope
Had swift discovery, also how the king,
Royal in state, was royal in reward.
"The Lord vouchsafe with us be found the cross!
For never house of God was bare as ours,
Nor begged by greater poverty an alms."
Thus answering him the brethren afterward
For many days within their sanctuary
Lodged holy Anders, while from base to top
Their feet unresting roved; nor barrenly.

One morn at primesong to the chapel ran
A tall, flushed neophyte who with lusty cry
Drowned chant and tone: "Non nobis Domine,
Sed Tuo nomine da gloriam!
Behold the prize! occulted like a star
Long ages in this time-gnawn husel-box
Hidden within a chiselled socket-stone
Hung on a pivot, giving outward when
By what the world would call a lucky chance
My prying fingers pressed the nether half,
Just overhead where sits our reverend abbot
Next that groined pillar in the refectory."

So with the nigh-forgotten things of old
The cross was found; then, in the avid hands
Of holy Anders, grudgingly bestowed,
"For," murmured they, "Need grippeth heart and
wringeth
E'en drops of blood where naught beside can move."

He with their Bursar for a comrade soon
Regained Jerusalem; there to the monks
Made for the matchless relic safely clasped
Around his neck, on Valdemar's behoof,
Such ample recompense the cloister chest
Nigh bursting bulged with yellow ingots crammed;
Nor tarried, but pressed onward to the shore,
Yearning to greet his tow-haired crew again.

To him so wayworn ne'er had bonnier sight
Eased sun-glared vision than the old, rugged port
As o'er her jumble of flat-roofed dwellings blew
Salt breaths of ocean, sweeter than perfume,
Because they whispered "home"; but, woe to tell,
The sharp-prowed ship was gone! for, giving heed
To idle tales, the pining mariners
Believed him dead, nor waited certain proof;
Fain to escape a strand whose summer heat
Melted the tempered pitch within the seams,
Hove anchor, and squarely stood right out to sea;
Nor knew, when settling low the land seemed haze,
How Anders watched first hull, then spars, then sails,
Dip on the faint horizon and leave him lone.

The gayest hues are brought to sombrest shades
When grief peers glooming at them. Lately bright
Past dappled cloudlets with soft winds at play.
Burnt with a curse; and as her fretted rocks
Beat back the brine yet show a wave-wet face,
So Anders, who had thrust his age aside,
Forgot infirmity, and travel-spent
Had fought down weakness to attain that hour,
Then broke in bitter tears.

"Why weep ye, Sir?"
As though distilled from air a humpbacked man
Had stood and spoken thus, and, ere reply
Could come, "Rest thee awhile within mine arms."
A voice that smote its thrill through brain and blood,
Sweet music, lulling might; a visage mild,
Yet terrible as though the lightning played
About it, and that every flash was love.
Who was the marvellous deformed, and whence?

Bereft a conscious thought, or will, or power,
Deprived of action, passive in stranger hands,
But feeling life remained, though locked within,
And the key held by others, Anders rose
Into the atmosphere prepollently
Upborne, and there sustained, in swift advance
Past dabbled cloudlets with soft winds at play.
He deemed that wastes of waters tossed beneath
And spattered at their marge in tumbling surf.
Then, floating lower when the waves were gone,
Plains, mountains, rivers, cities, huddling twirled
In shadowy landscape-tangles; touching earth
He trode, or dreamed he trode in actual steps,
On some dim height where burned perpetual fire
Before a shrine, unless 'twere phantasy—
The height, the fire, the shrine—for this abode
A maze within a maze of memory when
Through after years his reminiscent mind
Wrought o'er the miracle, and strove to clear
That bird-like journey's veriest processes
In the alembic of slow-revolving thought.

Still onward speeded, in that mighty grasp
Bound though unfettered, of activities

Transcending man's the object, nor assent
Nor dissidence his function; as one lies,
Caught 'twixt sleep and waking, his inner self's
Unstirring sport, by vivid images
Of fancy worked to sweat with fear or smile
With joy.
A sudden loosening of bonds,
A rush of sentiency, sight, motion, use
In all the body's offices restored;
Warm daylight, breezes blown off heather, kine,
Wide pastures, falling freshets, towering trees—
Most wonderful! he stood upon a mound
Outside Slagelsé, birth-place and earthly home;
Yea, and the cherished jewel at his neck.

Thus was the cross obtained for Valdemar
Who reverently received it, and intent
And gladly heard the story of the quest.

How Dagmar wore the Cross.

As one might deem the sky were split in twain,
Uplooking, unaware a cobweb blown
Across his eye tricked vision, Valdemar
Saw in the promised warfare, in the wall
High builded for defence by captive gangs,
The weal of Denmark, and the puissance
Of Danish hosts, the Eternal's purposes
Fulfilled, himself as champion of the Christ
By the quest's issue sovranly confirmed.

Ah, the diviner life which lingers nigh,
Unlived, unheeded! "Free the prisoners!
Undo the plow-tax!", still sweet Dagmar prayed,
When fitting time gave fair occasion voice.
"O, Valdemar, what horrors have I seen,
Here in our Denmark that is thine and mine,
Here near the palace that is mine and thine!
But yester-morn I rode by some foul place
Where wan and wasted wretches packed a-row
While on their naked flesh thy brawny smiths
With red-hot rivets welded collars, bolts,
Bars, manacles, and chains, croaking meanwhile
To the hammers' resonant clink, a filthy song.
Think of it, Valdemar! the biting iron
Forged to the limbs of men thy brothers! Ay,
Thy brothers, for the dear Lord for them as thee
Writhed on the cross! Think of it, Valdemar!
To labour, sleep, sit, stand—midnight as noon,—
No moment's respite—still thy clanking chain,
Thy bolt, thy shackle cramping natural use,
And loading with their fell embrace the limbs
Made for free movement in the free air of God.
And these with wives and babes—babes, Valdemar—
Waiting in some far home—waiting—with babes!
Can we be blessed who keep them waiting? Oh,
Each fettering blow bruised mine own flesh! I had
leaped
Down from my horse and struck thy grimy fiends
And bidden them cease, but Strangge held my arm
And whipped away. Never one instant's rest
For them! What right is thine to make wild beasts
Of these thy fellows—husbands, brethren, sons?
Thou'dst slain the churl who durst so maul thy hounds!

And as though the queenly lesson must be conned
In direst deed, that same unhappy morn
I saw a poor soul crouching on the way
In desolation, by her squalid home—
Thy callous officers had even ta'en
Her sorry bed and cooking pans to pay
The plow-tax, for gold had she none. O, love,
Is this thy doing? Can we be blessed in this?
I tremble for ourselves while pleading thus
With thee, as always I must plead, for them.
In the deliberate cruelties of the cruel
Are we not thus participant, and by
Our greater light more deeply answerable?
How dare we preach the Christ and yet do this?

Then Valdemar bethought: "The Queen is young;
Afresh from friends and all that charmed her life;
Unused to wear a crown; unused to rule
Upon a throne; and like a yearning child
With every need fulfilled who lacketh all.
Once on her bosom rests that holy charm,
Content, benigner thus begot, will lay
The haunting phantom of her innocent mind."
And with denial veiled in jest he oft
Would quit her presence and pass musing on
To where his captains marshalled their array
In practice of war's woful strategy,
Or where like stranded porpoises his craft
Scooped sandy wallows with their oaken stems;
Leaving the steadfast love which sought to win
His dauntlessness to nobler deeds of peace,
And missing, while his fervid soul foresaw
Far lands brought low, diviner life anigh!

The self-same day that Anders placed within
His grasp the hallowed token Valdemar
Snapt Samson-like the withes of idleness.
Seven days beyond, his chosen fighting men
Swarmed up the ships awaiting his command.
Next came the parting. On the rippled beach
Stood Dagmar and her lord; the bright midmorn
Glinting from helm and vantbrace, as within
The steely roundure of his arm close locked
She nestled on his breast.
"Nay, nay," he said,
"Sweet Queen of Wifehood, stay thy tender grief;
But shed me joyful floods when I return
And claim the meed of victory in thy smile!"
Powerless to check the tears, inward she bent
Her drenchéd face so that he should not see
How fast they fell.
"I leave thee in my stead
Chief at the council-board, perchance to teach
Our hoary seers a fresher wisdom—shall
Thy step turn thither; yet thy guileless lips
Were better lent to woman's lovelier work—
Fervent entreaty at the Eternal Throne
For help to Denmark's host and Denmark's king.
Nay, weep no more; 'tis but a little while
When thou wilt welcome all thy truants back.
Good comfort hast thou, surely, through the time;
For holy Anders yonder hath his charge
To overwatch and keep thy feet in peace,
To do thy bidding, lead thee nearer still
To Him, thy soul's delight, the Crucified."
"My Valdemar!", she sobbed, "mine, only mine!
Thou with thy man's mind and confident brow

Canst boldly front the coming time, but I,
A woman, shrink, and dread! This rending hour
Were I thy wife and meet it tearlessly?
My life seems crushed into this instant space
Where past thy going can no other be
When I may ever hear thy voice again!
O, fold me closer, love! long days will dawn
And sink to night ere thy strong arm as now
Shall bind me round. Once more, my Valdemar,
Hear me for His dear sake Who died for them,
Pity the prisoners and thy poorer folk!
O, let me minister to these hapless ones
Thy grace and bounty! Truly, was't not this—
This—for a morning-gift—thou promisedst,
Keeping it hid within a laggard hand
To make the deed more dear? Give it me now!
And take the knowledge thou shalt trebly reap
Thy benefaction in the heavenly aid
Thou seek'st—yea, to the guardian hosts of fire
Who ringed the man of God in Dothan's mount."

Then clanged the clarion, signal of depart.
She strained him to her bosom. Valdemar
Drew o'er her head fine links of gold which hasped
The amel'd cross; and soothed and spake:
"Look, Sweetheart, see! here is thy morning-gift,
A rare memorial of our suffering Lord,
Found by a miracle and won for thee
Where o'er the gateways of the land He trode
Watch sentinel crags of Sinai—Anders may
Unfold the wondrous tale—how surelier fit
For her my queen, my Dagmar, than the things
Her pure compassion hath so oft implored!

I go, my love; hark to the brazen cry!
As viewed the morning-gift when I am far,
May thy faith's prayer ascend for me above
The windy rack of this tempestuous world:
Soul of my soul, farewell! God shield thee, dearest!"
"Farewell.", she murmured, losing sight and sense,
Like a gale-toppled flower bowed swooning down;
He beckoned to her maidens, gently gave
The unconscious form to their encircling care,
Then leaped within the boat, and thus was gone.

The Danes had never known such steadfast light
Of Love as for them shone when Dagmar sat
On high a regent for the king and stooped
And cheered the captives, leaned to the indigent,
Dowered all with words of comfort, oped her hand
And eased their bondage with a bounty culled
By pity from a brimming storehouse. Thus
June left her shower-smirched roses to endure
July's long violence of sunshine; that
Burned into August's fiercer, shortened fire,
Then flamed o'er Autumn's gorgeous foliage-blooms,
But dying ever dying, until at touch
Of the first snowflake the Year's great hearth grew cold.
'Mid all the seasons' change unchanging, still
The same young queen moved calmly through the land
Lulling drear misery and desperate need
By goodness done, e'er, greater than her gifts,
Giving herself. And Anders at her side
Added a zeal unfaltering as her own
Yet fused with age's prudence. Happy time!
In peace through peace she passed; she put away
The pomp of state, she doffed the diadem,

She wore the coronal of her people's love;
That only. Dagmar! Joy of the Danes! true queen—
The queenliest queen where queens should ever reign—
Wert thou, enthroned in man's and woman's heart!

Meanwhile, the king with sudden storm of war
Stunned the Livonians; like a scattering herd
The thunder frights they fled his scathing hand
To inland strongholds kept by quaking bog,
Cave, cliff, or forest, whence, by solemn lot
Ordained in sacrificial bands they dashed
Against the phalanxed steel, impeding thus
The march, and plucking e'en by the hand of Death
Such sheaves from Time that served their chieftains well
To form before the last unravaged town
One ultimate host of sad, revengeful men
Controlled with skill, and bound by dreadful oaths
To face and fight the Dane while fist or finger
Or any shred sufficed to grip a skean.

One sunrise, ambush-galled, infuriate,
The invaders reached that bosky plain, by tarn
And mountain girt, where the grim multitude
Awaited their attack.
"Standards! advance!"
The king commanded: "Denmark, to the charge!
On, knights and footmen! Denmark and the Christ!
This day shall crown our triumph! Hey, for home!
These dogs no longer 'scape; charge, and thy fly!"
Out rang the trumpets; forward swiftly pressed
With answering shout his veterans; but disposed
Behind deep ditches, pitfalls, felled tree trunks,
At vantage, patriot savages at bay

Thrice valiantly drove back the Danish wolves.
"What spell is on us? Are we changed to women?
Do we hide suckling teats beneath our mail?"
Balked, shamed, yet in repulse more terrible
The king chafed, flinging gibes like stinging hail,
Then, rancour smoothed to invincible resolve,
"Now, Father Andrew, use thy art, and pray
Avengement of thy martyr'd monks be given.
Up on yon hill where thou canst overlook
The slaughter, go, and with thee take thy priests
And seek the help divine so sorely earned,
While I will lead a fresh assault and force
That bulwark or sleep with the dead to-night."

The gray Archbishop burned with inward flare
Of rage, and like a prophet raised his voice
As on the hill he stood:
"In Rephidim
Came Amalek, and fought with Israel;
And Joshua chose him men, as Moses bade,
And fought with Amalek and overcame;
For Moses, servant of the living God,
Held up his hands, and Israel prevailed.
I am the servant of the living God;
Ye are His chosen people of to-day.
O Danes, fear not! but smite as Joshua smote.
The Lord beholding these my hands for ye
Uplifted now will likewise grant my prayer!"
Then, Moses-like, he stretched his hands on high,
Besought the Almighty mightily to repeat
The blessing and consume the idolater.

"Once and again, true hearts, to victory!"
So shouting, Valdemar anew led on
His lately baffled men. First to defy
The shock, a huge Livonian chieftain reared
His bulky frame before their timbern wall.
Young Ingovand, the standard-bearer, claimed
His insolent challenge, and intrepidly
Rushed on, assailing; but the giant raised
A ponderous club in sinewy arms aloft,
And dealt such swift, evadeless ruin as crushed
Headpiece and brain-pan, then exultingly
Wrenched from the stiffening hand the gore-slimed staff,
Daring the bravest. Fleetly strode the king
Toward the swaggering spoiler; dire his wrath.
"Dear Ingovand, well shalt thou be revenged!"
He cried in tones made tremulous by regret.
From the hill-top the grisly Andrew saw,
And screeched command "Quick! quick! hold up my hands!
Woe, that for heaviness of age they fell
When slain was Ingovand! Hear us, good Lord!"

Between the serried hosts that waited, hushed
E'en that the pawing of a horse, the chance
Clash of shield 'gainst harness, the casual clink
Of weapons, ay, the breaths drawn hard in tense
Expectancy, cracked in the ear like shots,
These champions met, afire with a fury of hate.
Again the stark barbarian swang his club;
It hissed through air, smote full the guarding boss,
Dinted the helm, snapped laces, bearing down
The Victor on one knee. Well for the king
His brawny arm could bar the forceful blow,

Else had he sped one way with Ingovand.
"Brave Valdemar is lost!" ran shudderingly
From lip to lip, when, quicker than their moan,
He tore away the loosened helm, and hurled
Pashing the foe's grim visage, then, tiger-like,
Sprang on the blenching giant, drave to hilt
His gleaming blade, and as the impotent mass
Pitched pronely, snatched the banner, waved it high,
Heartened his eager Danes, and headed them,
Fired by resistless valour, over all
Livonian cunning had contrived in hope
To stem the deathly flood.
"Smite, hip and thigh!
Smite, smite, and spare not!," the Archbishop shrieked,
His wizened arms upheld on either side.
Onward they pressed, King Valdemar in front
Seemed some destroying angel; right hand grasped
His ravening sword, left hand that wondrous flag—
"God's gift," they called it—and his yellow locks
Streaming behind, wet with the spurting blood.

Heathens these wild Livonians might be,
Rough-hearted, brutal, knowing not the Christ
Save as fierce Danes had preached by rapine and glaive,
But if where they were born, and breathed, and grew,
And held the gift—that blesséd, rugged country,
Their very own—in freedom—were not home,
Home and the thousand things which hang thereon,
With right to come and go and fight and love
Of their own will, not bond but free men ever—
For them earth held no home, for slaves had none!
Why should they falter now? The worst had come.
They could but die, and so their death should help
To rip the curst invader from that home,

Why, better die than live!
Bold in despair—
In front, the immitigable king; in rear,
The sullen tarn—they grappled with the foe.
Groans, curses, war-cries fouled each passing breeze;
A living wave upon a sea of blood,
Danes and Livonians billowed to and fro
Till what they trampled was a hideous mire
In which they slipped and plashed. Nigh thick as haulms
Beneath the sickle, the barbarians lay;
Nor wholly unrevenged: Sir Strangge, he
Who fetched fair Dagmar for his king from far,
Sturdy Sir Limbek, iron-thewed Sir Blan,
Urbane Sir Gyomas, proud Sir Peter Glob,
And thirty meaner knights, with goodly tale
Of men-at-arms, fell, pierced through armour joints
By spear, sharp skean, or arrow.
Heavily
The day dragged evenward ere left of all
The throng that late had battled with the Dane,
A wretched skin-clad remnant, wounded sore,
Stood 'mid a heap of slaughtered friends, and begged
In uncouth tongue and simple-speaking sign,
The largess of their miserable lives.
King Valdemar beheld, and mercy moved
His heart; the gray Archbishop interposed
With warning utterance, and overcame:
"O king! remember now thine oath which thou
Didst swear aforetime; let the villains burn,
An odour of sweet sacrifice to God!
Else thou and all thine house shall be like Saul
Who shunned to execute His righteous wrath,

And spared to slay the heathen utterly.
Mar not thy victory, 'tis given of God."

Quick was the pyre made ready; bound thereon
The human sacrifice. Their upward gleam
Fronting the umbered clouds which cloaked the sky
With ruddy semblance of the field below,
The flames leapt lithely, licking off the flesh
And leaving naught but drifts of powdery ash.

Due burial dealt their dead the Danes abode
No longer in that desolated land,
But soon embarking, loosened sail, and caught
A fair wind blowing whither they would be.

Dim thunders of the fight had rolled o'ersea
To Denmark and her queen, in tales of blood
And death by mariners and merchants told;
Which heard, the folk made feast and holiday,
Shouted abroad the praises of their king,
Strong Valdemar the Victor, conquest-crowned!
A breath of victory swept throughout the realm
Striking wild thrills of joy from every soul,
But when the whirlwind passed, and moments came
Serener, pity-freighted, Dagmar knelt,
Rich in the glory of a woman's love,
And prayed our Father He would heal the wounds
Of war, and that calm days of peace might dawn
Ere for the garner of this mortal life
Her wifehoood's ripening fruitage should be won.

Forgetting self, remembering others, thus
Her noble course was run; she shared her joys,
Their griefs, with them. The pining prisoner,

The moiling peasant, much as men may be rapt
From shame and squalor, gyves and sordid bounds,
Cheered by her kindliness durst hope and sing;
And the cramped, worn existences o'erwhelmed
In cruel depths of misery and want,
Reached upward by her aid—as in some vale
When mists are lifted by the rising sun,
How fragrantly expand long-folded flowers!
Nor these alone her tender influence felt,
But stolid councillors were drawn to deeds
Of charity toward willful ones who err;
To enact new laws in higher wisdom framed,
Which gentlier dealt with human weaknesses,
Nor sought by code to arrogate His function
Who says "Vengeance is Mine, and recompence."

A presence pure, adorable, benign,
She walked the ways before them, led them on
Along His path, the ever-beckoning Christ,
Till one sad noontide holy Anders came,
Without the One they looked for, to the poor
Who reaped her blessings at the gate, and told
In accents trembling with unuttered fear,
Their Queen, their best beloved, lay swooning-weak,
Held in the sweet adventure which doth lend
The wife a mother's name. Day after day
He came, and brought their whispered suit no dole
Of comfort; she but waxed the weaker; sick
Past leechcraft, yet unracked by pain.
O, strange!
Heir to a kingdom, claiming but a grave,
The babe had spurned the breast, and closed his eyes,
Then smiled and turned his face away from Earth

And left the wonderful, love-proffered house
Dropping again to dust untenanted.

She who knew all the mother-pangs knew none
Of the dear bliss which waits on motherhood,
And wondered, as her travail-misted sight
Beheld the shrouded body borne to rest,
If Jesus' mother when her Son had gone,
Felt what she felt, past power of thought to think,
Or tongue to utter, that all strength to stay
Behind him longer here, went when he went.
She would elsewhither be; the spirit grew
Within her till it scorned the fleshly bars,
To a sublimer fortune bidden, and yearned
To quit this place of weeks and years which flee
As they were shadows thrown by scudding clouds.
She waited for the freeing touch of God
Our Father's hand, calm, beautiful as night
When winking stars, the wimpled moon unseen,
Alone do light the world. Yet was her mind
With the folk alway. "My poor lambs! do thou,"
She sighed to Anders, "feed for the sake of Christ
When I am taken." He, in fond demur:
"God's will be done, dear lady, but the Lord
Who raised dead Lazarus from the tomb, may build
Thy shattered frame in newer strength compact,
And through the impoverished current of the veins
Pour fresher health's abundant richness." "Nay,
Old friend, the Master calleth; is't for me
To fear the deep, dark valley who have seen
Rest's waters there and know the Guide? Yet I
Would fain endure till Valdemar returns,
For, now, my voice might win him to unloose

The prisoners, and undo the plow-tax. This,
If this were done, I had not lived in vain;
True life is measured by the good we do,
And not by days or hours."
"Then hath thy life
Been true indeed, sweet Queen!"
"A truer life
Remains: there is an empire nobler far
Than Earth can yield or brain conceive, beyond
The melting fields of blue in Paradise!
O, grant me, God, ere changed this hither verge
For that Thy better country, I may see
My husband's face, and gain for these the boon
Before denied—unworthy as I am!
Yet grant me this, dear Lord, then take me home."

These words did ever, while she slowly waned
Soar winged by Faith to Him who called her thence;
Meekly she prayed, and oft they heard her prayer,
"O, grant me this, dear Lord, and take me home!"
When, afterward, she feebly pressed to lips
Too weak for speech the amel'd cross which rose
And fell above her faintly-beating heart,
They knew she mutely breathed the self-same prayer.

'Twas at a sad month's end—her eager soul
Riving the clay—that a swift messenger
Rode to the gate, shouting "The king hath come!
Touched shore this morn, and now at Skanderborg
He halts to rest our wounded men!"
Fast flew
The tidings; Dagmar heard—sense-sharpened—looked
At Anders, whispered in his bended ear,
"Quick, send Sir Knut, and fetch the King!"; no more.

Hard rider, trusted henchman, spurred Sir Knut
With loosened rein the doleful errand through,
By wood and wold where glancing sunshine laughed
And mocked the watery sorrow of his eye.

Weary and journey-worn, King Valdemar
Had lodged that day upon the castled isle
At Skanderborg, and, with the bivouac ranged,
As from the west horizon, up the sky
Streamed sunset's gorgeous gonfalons, alone
He strode the terrace, watching well content,
And smiling on his captains bade them rouse
The coming dark with merry feast and song.
Then pacing back and forth, mused much upon
The stormy circumstances of his life,
Mechanically by the busy scene
Led on a mental trail of wrack and gloom;
Turning anon with glad escape from these
To brighter things, remembering naught but her
His girl-queen Dagmar; but the happy day
Poor Strangge brought her from the Böhmer-land.
What fairer gem had ever decked a crown,
Adorned a throne—more priceless-exquisite?
Now he would live in peace, his conquests done,
And gather sturdy children round his knee—
"What though the springtide of our love be past?
The summer is eternal, and shall bloom
In blossom'd sweetness knowing not decay."
Resolved desire thus dared an eavesdropper
As the long lift and thud of galloping hoofs
Beat on his ear, quickly he looked and saw
Sir Knut's white charger hurling o'er the plain,
A minute later reach the campéd host,

Heard a hoarse cry "The king! where is the king?",
Tranced, with dull evil striking in his heart
Stared on, and saw the steed come thundering
Across the bridge like the pale horse bestrid
By Death in the Apocalypse, till underneath
Sir Knut stood in the stirrups, and shrieked up,
"My king! away! away! Oh God, the queen's
A-dying, dying! come to Ribé, come!"

King Valdemar the Victor, stricken low,
Even in the time of triumph, fled beyond
The barbican, gripped the first bridle, sprang
To saddle, drove the sharp rowels deep, and swept
Through the dun eve a hurricane of woe.

Running to horse, a medley retinue
Of thirty knights, ill-mounted, ill-equipped,
Dashed following closely after, but, one by one,
Their random-gathered coursers, winding, lagged,
Until, of all, at Gridsted did remain
The king and stout Sir Knut—Away! by field
And thorp, where people shivered in their beds
"'Tis the wild huntsman and his devils' train!"
Away! long hours through night, God help the need!

What if ere reached she die, and see me not?,
He thought in agony, what if her eyes
Do never beam again her tender love?
What if she smile upon me as of old
No more, nor sweetly coo 'My Valdemar'?
Ah, beast! dost stumble? on! or I will run
Afoot to ease my heart's wild thirst of hope.
O light of life! wilt thou then quit me quite?

Wilt thou not stay and cheat this robber Death?
Wilt thou not stay and help me to the Christ?

An age of torment crawled, where every mile
Stabbed with a keener anguish; straining, last,
His gaze, the stately palace loomed a-gleam
With flitting lamps.
A clash of armour nigh
Sounded within the quiet room where she,
The land's Beloved, lay tranquilly at rest.
His heavy, hurrying step broke through their wail;
He entered—looked—"What? she is dead?" "She asked
But now for thee, then went.", young Kirsten moaned.
"Dead? Oh my God! and I denied her prayer:
Dead, love? without a kiss, a smile to bless
My pathway lone? dead! none were e'er as thou,
Sweet angel, to thine home so soon returned!"

Pale as a white wild rose the ruthless wind
Cuts down, she slept before him; motionless
Upon her bosom, now, the cross reposed
Girded by one thin hand. "She yearned and craved
To bide until thy coming," Anders dared,
"God hath willed otherwise; His will be done!"
"Hath He not slain my darling? Why should I,
Sir priest, mumble therefore 'His will be done'?
Where is the kindness of the deed? Where shown
The mercy that for aye endureth? Where
The full compassion? Where the pitiful,
The righteous Judge—her blameless life deflowered?
What had she done that many a year should not
Glide softly by and leave her silver-haired?
God help me an I rave! How can I else?"

Low the strong warrior bowed o'er her still form,
Shaken to gusts of sobbing by the force
Of a great passion of blended agony
And love which whirled aside all reticence,
All self-control, in one omnipotent,
Awful, outburst. Tears fell on that thin hand;
He kissed them off, lingering in touch amid
The dear, frail fingers. Suddenly he raised
Himself above her, calling, as though the full
Intensity of Being crammed the cry
And waited on the answer: "Dagmar! Wife!
A token! Open thine eyes! Give of their balm
To ease my withered soul through the long years!
I die without thy smile! O, speak to me!"

Had deep-dawn glimmered through the night and shone
Upon her face, or was it holier light
Than day or night could give? She oped her eyes,
She spake, clear, sweet:
"Unloose the prisoners' chain!
Undo the plow-tax!" Quick he signed Sir Knut
"Let this be done.", then, with a look whose love
No tongue might tell, her faithful spirit passed
From Earth and tears to Christ in Paradise.

They bore her corse to Ringsted, over sea,
By Lillé Belt and Storé Belt, and through
The church's bridal gate; around her neck
Untouched that amel'd cross. Now will the Dane
Bend by her tomb, and bless the gentle Queen
Who asked not gems nor gold nor acres broad,
But good to others, for a morning-gift.

CHRISTMAS.

What was given us men that night
There in Bethlehem long ago—
That which makes To-Day more bright,
Lifts Hope to a loftier height,
Fires the blood with heavenlier glow?—
Now, we but begin to know.

Who was born for us that night
Of a maiden's mother-woe;
Passing on in lonely might
Into realms beyond the sight
Through the portals where we go?—
As He knows, are we to know?

What was done for us that night?—
When we meet Him, from Earth's low
Rags Love-drawn to robes of white,
Kiss His feet, with whisper light
"Was't for *me*, dear Lord?" ... e'en so
We shall scarcely ever know.

THE VISITORS.

When sown by God in Life on Earth,
A germ unfolding undefiled,
The soul is born to fleshly birth,—
Youth comes and clothes the child.

Lends him her pure and early grace,
Dwells a beloved and loving Guest,

Plants Laughter on the ruddy face,
And Joy within the breast.

Then Manhood coming girds in strength,
Matures the body for the strife,
Cheers and ennobles, till at length
Is reached the prime of life.

Age nearing bends the sturdy back,
Wrinkles the forehead, stints the breath,
And leading down the well-worn track
Guides him to lovely Death.

Death comes the last but never goes,
Divests him of the earthly clod,
Makes him a fair, unfading Rose,
And yields him back to God.

IN AMERICA.

Democracy.

As Gideon answered Israel "Neither I
Nor son of mine shall over you be king,
The Lord Himself shall rule", we answering
To you who drag the rusted chain yet ply
The praise of Monarchy, shall still deny
All right divine to such a paltry thing,
So palpable a Cheat whose rose-wreathed ring
Conceals not gem but gyve; until the sky
Uncloses for our Lord no throne is set
Here in America for any man:

The purple His who wore the thorn—and yet
In human brotherhood we lead the van
Among the peoples! Crown and Coronet,
There is no place for ye in Freedom's plan.

IN AMERICA.

Lincoln.

*'He belongs to the ages'
With seers and sages,
Heroes and mages—
Turn History's pages
Who e'er hath earned wages
Mightier, grander?
What leader, commander,
Hath less for Self lusted?
For those who had trusted,
Impersonal, purely,
More wisely, more surely
Won truer glory?
Whose was the story
Filled with such sorrow,
Helpless to borrow
Hope for the Morrow—
Misery greater—
Friend turned to Traitor,
Foes at the gate or
Hid in the dwelling,
Cowards foretelling
Peril, disaster—

*Stanton's words when Lincoln died.

Blockheads made master,
Safety a bubble;
Toil, wrack, and trouble
These only certain
Each side the curtain—
Earth with no other
Gifts for this brother
Bound for the lowly,
Bound by the holy
Thongs of his being
For the unseeing,
For the long-fettered
Fearlessly bettered,
Bound with sad smiling
For the beguiling,
For the unknowing—
Freely bestowing
Goodness and gladness
From his deep sadness—
Bound for the nation—
Bound for salvation—

Was consummation
Ever achieved thus?
Ever bereaved thus?

March, 1893.

IN AMERICA.

The Transvaal "Republic".

What of all tyranny is more to hate
Than that which lurks assassin-like behind

The robes of Liberty, to gag and bind,
Betray, oppress the stranger, confiscate
The rights of men to rule within the State
They make their home, deal offices well-lined
To subtle myrmidons, yet bribe and blind
The burgher, reign by lies, intimidate
With war's curst engines of destruction bought
Of booty wrung from Industry, pass laws
Which mockingly withold the franchise sought
And strengthen Wrong and sharpen thievish claws
To strike the deeper! Shall we endure the thought?
Perish this treachery to our common cause!

15th August, 1896.

IN AMERICA.

Nations.

Let us be men, my brothers; men are more
Than nations; Brotherhood's once-loosened tide
Shall sweep away all barriers that divide
Mankind; "they may be one"—can we not soar
To this? through stygian darkness of the hoar
Past centuries, touch of each was lost; in wide
Emergence into Dawn, shake hands! beside
The pale no longer cur-like snarl; the door
Of Love lies open; enter; rase for aye
The savage's blood-pricked confines; patriots then
Of one vast realm where brother lights the way
For brother, with no crown on earth again
But His the Omnipotent King of Glory, say,
Shall this be so? not nations; no! but Men.

THE BRITISH FOLK TO AMERICA.

Over the flood
Greet we our own,
Blood of our blood,
Bone of our bone:

Be the need Thine
Gladly we stand
One in our line
There on Thy strand:

There on the main
One in our fleet,
Ringed with the slain,
Thundering defeat!

Told were as dust,
Monstrous in might,
They who would thrust
Us from the fight—

Call! and the flood
Brings Thee Thine own,
Blood of Thy blood,
Bone of Thy bone.

23rd April, 1898.

PECCAVIMUS.

I

Now you have it, keep the lead
America!

Who should us but you succeed—
Blood and bone and brain our breed?
Slavery done and Cuba freed
Prove your brotherhood indeed,
America!

II

Then Cavite's miracle,
America!
DRAPER there's a tale to tell
When we surely fought as well
And without a shot it fell—
Yet your DEWEY bears the bell,
America!

III

Heed them not who growl from here,
America:
Jealous Europe's frigid sneer,
Those who dread lest you draw near,
Lest their paltriness appear
And the people see them clear,
America.

IV

Shall your puissant coming bring,
America,
Peace to kaiser or to king
Or to him of the bow-string
Or the lackeys of their ring?
That were but a thinkless thing
America!

V

Bold as you once did we smite,
America,
For the victims of the night,
For the cause of God and Right,
For the broadening of the Light—
Sought no better than that fight,
America.

VI

Then ne'er cried we "Hold, enough!",
Though the sleet blew on the buff,
Though our foes were staunch and tough,
We were aye a better stuff,
"Climbed" not "down" what e'er the "bluff",
America!

VII

That was ere the "prestige"-fanned
Little great ones humm'd the land—
Shotted guns, and cruisers manned—
With a six-stringed German band
Twanged by Hamid's bloody hand,
America!

VIII

For they thrust the Christ aside,
America!
And we listened as they lied—
Pompous babble, braggart pride—
Thus He left us when the tide
Turned—and we have drifted wide,
America!

IX

We have caught their baser tone,
America;
Ripening is the harvest sown—
Subject-martyrs left to groan,
Hamid propped upon the throne,
Crete redeemed by Greece alone,
America!

X

Now, our ships—if ours they are,
America—
Move as wills the small white czar!
East be Near or East be Far
Other steps before us bar—
We have lost our guiding-star,
America.

XI

Heu, peccavimus! and shent,
America,
Must we be, and haply lent
Sport for all the Continent,
Shaken from our gross content—
Yet is hope in chastisement,
America!

XII

Pray for us, loved Jonathan—
America!
We are still a kind of man,
Capable, belike, to plan

Or, you shining in the van,
E'en to follow as we can,
America;

XIII

Pray for us, majestic kin,
America!
Blood still thicker is than thin
German brew or Gallic bin,
Or the samovar's theine—
That we expiate our sin,
America!

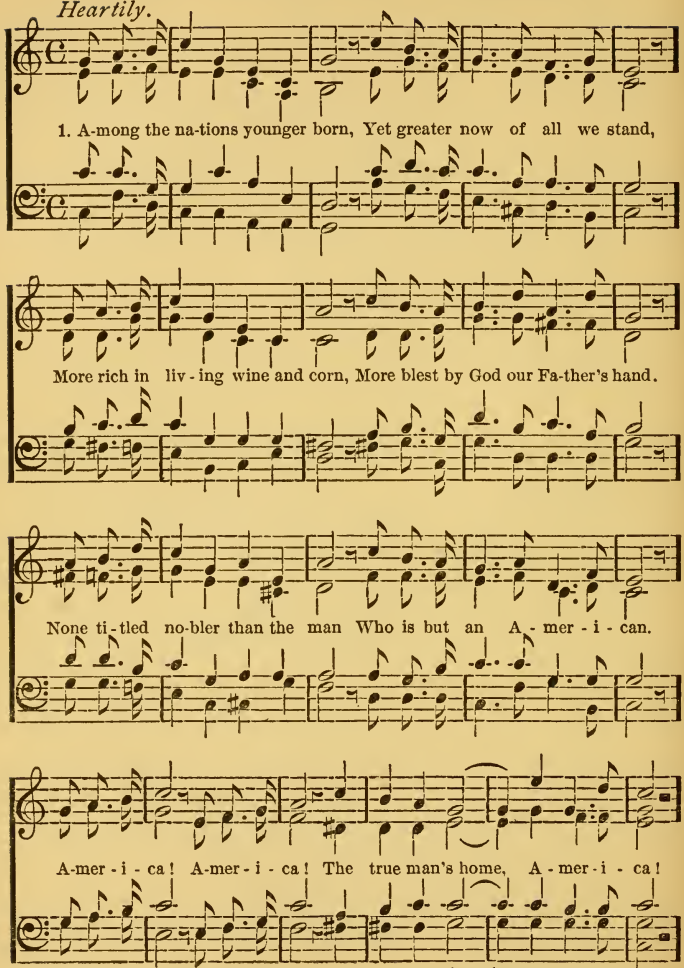
XIV

Warned, God's work is yours to do,
America!
Cleanse what ways are mired with you,
Firm and ready, pure and true,
Ease the Many, curb the Few,
Dash the Old World with the New,
America.

XV

Greatly won, now greatly hold,
America!
Stars and stripes and hearts of gold,
On Life's blazoned page inscrolled
First Knights of the newer fold,
God-ward looking, Christly souled,
America!
May, 1898.

THE AMERICAN ANTHEM



II

The rights imperial churls withold
Are ours in Freedom perfected;
No thronéd Vampire drains the gold
From toiling wretches faint for bread;
No feudal harpies vex and spoil,
Our lords are they who till the soil:
America! America!
The free man's home, America.

III

At our wide hearth glad millions live
Who have renounced the old-world thrall,
With room for millions more we give
A welcome and a home to all;
Our starry oriflamme unfurled
We march the Vanguard of the world:
America! America!
The world's great home, America.

IV

O, from our altar-continent
May Goodness in Life's fires ascend,
And thought and deed with Love be blent
Before Thine eye our King and Friend;
In righteousness our holy sod
Be held a trust for Thee, O God!
America! America!
Our holy home, America.

ROUNDHEAD SONG.

Sithen 'tis war, and pistols are primed,
What's to hinder my riding away?
Why should a maiden—although I have timed
Well for the road when she goeth to pray?

Sithen 'tis war, and ready am I,
What's to hinder my riding away?
Is it to look in her beamy brown eye?
Is it to hearken for what she might say?

Sithen 'tis war, and Rupert a-field,
What's to hinder my riding away?
Is it my love that would fain have her yield?
How if she daintily scorn to obey?

Sithen 'tis war, and trumpets are blown,
What's to hinder my riding away?
Is it to think how a fair woman grown,
Better were welcome than speeding to-day?

Sithen 'tis war, and men on the march,
What's to hinder my riding away?
Heel to the hide! Ha—there yon by the larch,
Hither she comes, and naught left but to stay.

YOU AND I.

You and I,
Where are we sailing,
Under what sky?
What vessels hailing?

What signal trying?
What pennant flying?
How are we standing?
Bound for what landing?
Wind in what quarter?
Know we the buoyage?
Longer or shorter,
What of the voyage?
What of our craft now—
Foul weather, ready
Forrard, abaft now,
Staunch, true, and steady?
No waves can fill her,
Answering fine?
Who holds the tiller?
Who heaves the line?

Storms will be scudding,
Seas will be thudding
Starboard and larboard,
Rushing and crushing,
Creeping and sweeping,
Laming and maiming,
Roaring and soaring
Ten fathoms high,
Hurricane suction,
Death and destruction—
You and I,
Say, shall we ride out
This devils' tide out?
Meet it unblenching,
Clear in the eye,
Strong in the soul,

Taking the drenching
Sure of the goal?

When the keel creaking
Threatens to slip,
And the blast shrieking
Wrenches the ship,
When fire-balls spatter,
And the spars shatter,
When the masts totter
And the decks rip,
And hell has got her
Hard in its grip,
Past hope, to thinking—
Shall we unshrinking
Face it and chase it,
Meet it and beat it,
Look up and espy
Morning awaking,
Starlight and far light
Shining above her?
Clouds at last breaking,
Blue in the sky?
Shall we so saven
Gain the fair haven,
There anchored lie;
Meet the souls' Lover
Night seemed to cover—
You and I?

SLEEP.

Float, lovely Sleep,
Free o'er the deep
Mine of the soul;
Peace be thy goal;
Brood close above;
Benison, Love
Harvests to reap
Ripened O Sleep
By thy control;
Bring perfect rest
Blessing and blest,
Forcing no toll;
Brimmed be the bowl;
Fill thou the soul,
Seize it and keep
Thine, lovely Sleep.

GEMMA.

I do not ask you who you are
Or from what heaven you lately came,
Or what unseen auroral bar
Makes us diverse as dew from flame.
Is it, diviner as you are,
Decreed for some repented shame
That 'mid our lives' perpetual jar
You win back home and cancel blame!

I do not ask you who you are,
I do not ask you whence you came—

So dearly pure, so rarely far,
My love doubts dumbly, fearing shame
I dare not dream dissolved the bar,
I dare but breathe your jewel-name,
And humbly hold you shrined the Star
Who lights my heart with holy flame.

MILLY.

They found her in a crowded slum, a wee
Wan child, with bare feet paddling down
A slimy gutter in a stream of filth
Behind a floating chip, watching with big
Blue eyes 'tween tangled wisps of pale brown hair,
If it would sail in triumph lengthwise through
Or lodge perversely crosswise 'gainst the grating.

She thought the world was built of brick, and chopped
In streets that folks could go for beer, and fenced
With high walls pierced by windows for the clothes
To dry if they were washed; while everywhere
The sky was a huge ceiling full of fog,
And smoke, and blacks, unless it rained or snowed—
Though puzzled how the falling flakes lit clean—
And all the ground was made of paving-stones
Or wooden blocks or asphalt so that when
It froze the horses could slip down and cut
Their knees. She thought the corner public-house
The only place in Winter looking warm
In Summer cool; that mothers always beat
Their children—called them horrid names, unless

Too drunk to hold the strap, or curse; that some
Poor children who had fathers also, got
A double beating and worse nasty names.

They found her thus, the frowsy shift she wore
Her only garment, and asked pityingly
How long she had had that dreadful cough, and why
Her mother did not nurse her; bent and kissed
The wasting, delicate lips; dropped words of balm
Into the pining heart; said she must meet
Them there to-morrow, they would come and take her
Out of the city for a holiday;
And, going, put some money in her hand.

Then she ran back to where her mother lay
Blear-eyed, white-faced, gin-sodden, fearful—still
Drunk with the dregs of yesterday's debauch—
To tell her what had happened—might she go?
And showed the silver they had given her—where
Was Heaven? Supine until she saw the coin
Which piled the child's lean palm, the mother rose
And steadying herself unsteadily
Against the dank wall, answered "Give it me—
The money—what? five shillings? here is luck!
Yes, you can go. Ah ... Heaven? Well, I know this,
Heaven must be far enough away from here!",
Then staggered out, nor coming back again
Until past midnight, stupefied with gin,
And falling prone across the bundled dirt
Which formed their bed, and bruising Milly's bosom.

Good women are God's human angels. When
They sought her in the morning she was there—

And thus had stood from earliest hint of dawn—
On the same kerbstone, waiting, pallid, tense,
But wondering till the wonder grew a pain
What Heaven could be and where. They took her then
To a Waif's Refuge; clothed her decently;
And sent her with a hundred other waifs
Out of the grime and slime of Babylon
For one day in the country. Silently
She sat among the busy chatterers
While the swift engine dashed the tranquil air
Of Summer into gusty eddyings
And left its broken curl of cloudy breath
Streaming above the carriages till whirled,
Expanding, dissipating, wind-borne, far
Behind, this way and that. So strange was all,
So utterly unlike what had been felt,
Or heard, or seen in that her cramped existence,
She could not apprehend the commonest
Of common meanings in these common things—
It might have been the Resurrection Morn
For aught she knew, and the freed steam's fell shriek
The great Archangel's trumpet-call to Life.

Within the darkened chamber of her mind
A great hope sprang, a very cereus bloom
White, splendent, odorous, as the marvel grew
Unfolding, and with such magical effect
That when the griding train had stopped and she
Had clambered out, the sunshine was no more
A flaming mystery, but a radiant pledge
Of swift fulfilment! Soon she stood within
A pleasant meadow where the birds' clear song
Made the air choral; where bright waters clinked

Against the pebbles half-articulately;
Where a fresh wind blown over bays of bloom
Tussled to rustling leaves of fringing trees,
With its invisible fingers' friendliest touch
Greeted the pilgrims, and caressed and kissed
The city's pallor from bleached brow and cheek.

The child looked up and, lo, the immanent blue—
Illimitable womb of worlds, a swift,
Great, glorious revelation, new to her
As though she were that instant born—in depth
On depth, near, far, around, away
Came flooding vision and suffused and swept
Along each tingling nerve, and stormlike passed,
Yet with such grasp upon the strands of life
It seemed her soul must follow through her eyes.
Then the glad tumult broke into a cry
A moment later choked upon her lips
By a fierce cough which dragged her back to earth
And bowed her down and then was lulled to gasps,
And thus to ease, as newer miracles
Beneath her feet among the cool, soft grass
Took on intensive shape before her gaze.
For when she moved to feel the grass itself—
How lovely, yet just trodden on like a street!—
Her lifted foot disclosed a trampled flower,
She knew it for a daisy, and shrank back
In fear of crushing others, but, the field
So thick their faint-flushed petal-cinctured discs
Had gemmed, no step could miss them.
Thither drawn
At sound of the cough's hoarse strangury, at sight
Of the bent, fragile figure with one hand

Stretched down commiserately as though to mend
The daisy's broken stem, a lady came
Yet waited watching with a tender phrase
Left an unvocal image in her mind,
Made mute by sudden wonder, for the face
Shone as transformed by crowned expectancy
Nor from within but from without writ o'er
By living light ineffably charactered
Supern from some invisible glory caught.

The shadow of the lady's wind-swayed dress
Flickered across the flower; the child glanced up,
To smile at features kindly smiling down,
And spake, made confident by their sympathy
"Please, this is Heaven, isn't it?", nor could be moved
To change, but looked with calm incredulous eyes
Not understanding, yet quite satisfied
That where the daisies grew, there, must be Heaven.

The bright hours through she lay upon the grass,
The blossoms round her, Summer all about;
For one day out of doors with light and love
In God's pure air—a stranger, yet at home.

When shone the stars about that pleasant field
They left her by the gutter in the street
Laden with posies; dreaming; tired; content.

Her mother in the morning wakened dazed
As when she huddled there, and saw the clothes
Clean, almost new, and snatched them from beside,
The helpless child, and pawned them, and came back
More drunk, and found her still upon the bed
And could not comprehend the little creature

Was deathly ill, unable all that day
To stir, struck down by fever and the dire
Consumption sucked through years from out the foul
Low den and fetid drains—nor lingered long;
Only some week or so with all the while
A bunch of faded daisies in her hand,
Moaning and whispering deliriously,
But cried ere fell the soul's frail walls "How light!
Where's all the smoke? I knew it must be Heaven!"

When the rough undertaker who buries them
Came with the contract coffin ready-made
To bury that small pauper meekly waiting,
He raised her carefully and dare not loose
The clasp of her lank fingers round those flowers.

Eternal Father, Thou Who didst create
What things were ever, or are, or will be created,
And couldst annihilate all things in a breath
And re-create them in a breath, and hold'st
All in the hollow of Thine hand, and workest
In perfect loveliness to perfect ends;
Who scann'st Infinity, and bid'st them dance
And know'st the voices of ultimate molecules;
And permeatest all things with Thy might;
Thou Who this day, to-morrow, or any day
Wilt brush away the fly we men call Time;
O Thou Who madedst and through Motherhood
Didst send Thy Christ a little child to grow
A man and walk the sordid earth for us
And work, and live, and die that we through Him
Might truelier live eternally in Thee—
Behold, they murder Childhood in the children!

O great, eternal Father, when Thou send'st
Thy Christ again in glory with Thy saints,
Let Milly be remembered! She had none
To teach her Who Thou art, or who He is—
Thy Way to Thee—that here Thy heaven is not!
If—then—the body's atoms are held for proof,
Oh, He will know her by the dust of those
Dead daisies 'mid the dust of her dead hands.

How very patient art Thou, Thou our God!

THE MOST FOOLISH THING.

O, brothers, what most foolish is of all
Our deeds on Earth to-day? That we assign
Millions of men and money, toil, combine
To make an army at a tyrant's call
So he may wield a scourge to lash and thrall
In brazen show of patriotism divine;
Thus builds he from the common ill his fine
Dynastic house; thus blindly we let fall
Artistic, scientific, industrial bliss,
The possible attainment of the Best,
For fanfares, pipe-clay, gilt, the serpent-hiss
Of bullets, discontent, the unquiet breast;
Quintessence of all foolishness is this—
And, brothers, we the stuff whence 'tis expresst!

ACH! ACH!

"Why, who art thou?", I moaned,
When for the tenth, the fiftieth, thousandth time
I rose defeated, bruised, ashamed,
To the gaunt, nimble, shadowy form
Who thus inveterate conqueror yet had ne'er
Familiar grown. "I am Thyself," he snarled,
"Thine evil self, the fond, permitted sin—
Wonderest thou therefore that I am so foul?",
And then withdrew into Myself again.

INSOMNIA.

Through a turmoil of thought,
And struggle for sleep
I come to the morn;
The battle is fought,
The hippogriffs creep;
O bliss never born!
Is thy fountain too deep,
Begirded by thorn?
Who reaps what I reap
Hath stubble for corn,
Haggard-eyed shears a sheep
Which is long ago shorn.

ROUNDHEAD SONG.

When lusty Dick takes down his flail,
Why doth he curse the breaking day?

Because no words can yet prevail
On comely Nell to answer, "Yea."

He strides along, and gains the barn,
His thwacks raise high the cloudy chaff—
He wishes he were in the tarn
Deep-drowned, and dangs himself for draff.

Morn brightens, and the mead is decked
With spangling frost; mists leave the sedge;
The mill-pool's waters clear reflect
The pollards leaning o'er the edge.

To waiting kine lithe lasses bound,
And deftly drain their udder'd store;
The wheezy mill-wheel trundles round;
Dick's thumping shakes the threshing-floor.

"Confound the girl! a better match
She seeks, to gather gowns of silk!"
But ho! a hand doth lift the latch!
'Tis Nelly with her pan of milk.

When lusty Dick hangs up his flail,
No happier man can bless the day;
For kisses win, though words may fail,
And comely Nell hath answer'd "Yea".

TO ETHEL ON HER WEDDING-DAY.

May He who once the Guest of men
Smiled on a marriage, smile on thine;
For potent now His hand as then
To turn Earth's water into wine.

THE SOVRAN POET.

The Sovran Poet sits on no chill height
Feeling for some far, faint divinity,
But comes and stoops and enters the low dens
Of men and women racked by wretchedness,
Stunted and grimed by hunger, drudgery, vice;
Blends his own being with theirs, breathes with their
breath,
Feels with their feelings, glides into their blood
With pulsings of diviner purposes;
Craftily lures them from themselves to know
That God is Love and they shall serve Him best
Who follow after Love in loving one
Another—not in apothegm or creed
But to the sharing of the final crust,
But to the healing of the loathliest wound,
But to the bearing of the heaviest load—
Thus dwelling, working, hoping, waiting with them—
That is the Sovran Poet, though he write
No verses—they, the souls he saves, his poems;
Dumb-golden songs of new-awakened Life.

Here to-day
Clad in clay;
Gone to-morrow,
What to borrow
O self-sower—
Higher, lower
Type, more bestial,
More celestial?

Loving hearts and friendly faces
If be dearth
What on earth
E'er the tender boon replaces?
Father, mother, sister, brother,
O, be kind!
Never blind
To the good in one another.

THE BITTER CUP.

Receiving the cup of life from Him
I put my lips against the brim,
And found it bitter, and loathed and spurned,
When the Lord God as thence I turned
Forced me back and bruised me sore
That the cup was bitterer than before;
But, lo, being told, I drank it up
And my tears had sweetened the cup.

OUR HOUSE.

As God's free souls, where'er water shoals,
Through sextuple sixty years
We built our house as wide as the poles
By the lives of our pioneers.

Our lads, our sires, ay, our hearts' desires—
We gave of our very Best
Where none had faced before them the fires,
With but Death to reward the quest.

They fought the savage and tamed and claimed
To hold him a brother's hand,
And fell struck dead or fiendishly maimed
As they taught him to till his land.

They set him school of the British rule
Of Right and Respect for Life,
Nor blenched though brained by murder's grim tool—
Greenstone hatchet or scalping-knife.

The Boer in vain laid his bloody train—
Made stripe of our chastisement—
In thousands slain, disaster, and pain,
To the joy of the Continent;

Though slow o'erpassed the infernal blast
Of German and Gallic ball
He hurled from rock and trench, yet at last
We had shattered the Sjambok-thrall;

A seed his breed never bred nor spread
We planted within his gate,
From them shall bloom—our sacrificed dead—
The fair flower of a British State.

What ocean's deep doth not hold asleep
These bravest among our brave?
What reef-jagged steep hath failed not to reap
Of them harvest to feed the wave?

Thus flesh and bone of our very own,
Its mortar their blood and sweat
The wall and all the house we have known,
Or the house we may raise us yet.

He reft our 'Mayflower's' lordly tower—
That crass Hanoverian!
Can aught requite the passing of power
Which made British, American?

A million years had his race by grace
Permission to reign, and sow
Our land with gold, the toll of their place,
Were it paid us, this debt they owe?

The house was built for us all, not one!
That all should with free right share
The treasure given a tropical sun
Or a continent otherwhere.

For great and small, not for one as all,
For all as for one, we wrought
Through Time's long aisles where scant light did fall
And above and beyond our thought.

A greater home than the mightiest Rome
E'er won in the times gone by,
A hive of Earth's richest honeycomb,
With the honey for low as high.

Despite our complaisance-ignorance
When despots would shrewdly lead
Us back in war and thraldom to dance
To the tune of dynastic greed;

Our sloth's excuse for a proved abuse
That change to a proven good
Had dragged the heel of Comfort, and Use
Constrated the ill which stood;

Our fetich-worship of princeling and king,
Adoring before their rod
In humbler fear than ever we bring
To the throne of the Living God;

Our foes without or our fools within;
Our Party and racial wars;
Our drunkenness, our poverty, sin;
And the hates of the emperors:—

Through all defect, made His own elect
We built us this wondrous thing,
By aid of Him Whom still we reject
As our king Who alone is King.

Thus wrought and plann'd shall dominion stand
Secure through the world's For Aye?
Or, ruin 'mid ruins, be blown on the strand
Of the years of a future day?

O, proud they were, of imperial air,
Imperial-imperial crowns,
Imperial splendour, imperial fair—
And we plow their imperial towns!

And wise and just was this faded dust,
Impartial in law as we;
Nor less than we nor baser—yet rust
And a name are their history!

See to't, o'erbold, who have long controll'd,
Lest Britain have built in vain,
And what ye deem a cope of pure gold
Be but gauds on a window-pane.

See to't, o'erbold, ye the rule who hold,
Lest Britain have built in vain—
Her glory pass, 'a tale' that is 'told',
And she, too, hath but waxed to wane.

For tread we may that "imperial" way
In pomp of an "empire" vast
To dust and rust and moth and decay
With the garbage which heaps the Past.

Its Form's dry-rot, idolatry's blot,
Corroding Experience, soil
Of Caste, its fretting tinsel—no jot
Have we lacking to wreck our toil!

"Deny, decry not nor purify;
'Twere crime to eradicate!",
Saith Self, "For all—the State—which is I—
Best be snug than regenerate."

Our peoples knock at the portal-rock,
Would enter—the home is theirs,
Content no more with titular mock
But demanding the place of heirs.

Nor longer held in a conqueror's grip,
By birth or by gift their right
To bonds of equal citizenship
Be the citizen black or white;

To rank of perfected brotherhood,
The Many to find their soul
And individual-general Good,
And enfranchised in self-control;

Where man's free choice by a man's one voice
Himself to himself hath lent
A keystone sure wherein to rejoice—
The whole Function of "Government."

Devolved selective whoe'er reflect
The State, or to make or deal
Her laws, thus fitted answering direct
The demands of the common weal;—

Such laws as patiently educate
The ignorant State and son
To integrate that Federal State
In the Freedom we slowly won;

As bridge the gangrene-abyss between
The rich and the destitute,
That those take Christ's own Golden Mean
And yield these of its golden fruit;

As reconstruct and attain; disdain
The politic Wrong's caress
Of gain; though flayed with losses maintain
To the uttermost, Righteousness;

As purge out lies in the dauntless wise
Of Liberty's lusty health;
Link light-drawn bonds of enduring ties
Through our marvellous Commonwealth.

Not less than men they we seat as meet
In office, nor more divine;
While old and young are starved in the street
Dare we still gem an idol-shrine?

Is here no pocket-inheritance
Conventionalism shall fine,
Or Superstition set us the dance,
Or be-label our peoples, "Mine."

Shall men grow dense in intelligence
Or fail in the Higher Plan?
Or lose their prime, conservative sense?
Were not "governments" made by man?

The "moral force" of our Press the cess
Paid Him we reject as King?
His Christ a corse? none loyal unless
They kneel low to some human thing?

Behold, the gray of a Larger Day
Hath broke through the ages' mist!
Imperialism will melt in its ray
With the slime of the anarchist.

And there, made fair, in that clearer air
Our purified house sublime
Shall square upbear through tempests that dare
And outlast e'en insatiate Time.

SOUTH AFRICA.
(1899-1902.)

I

O Thou Great Love Divine
Are not Thy children Thine
Shadow to deal with shine,
Myrrh and the mingled wine?

II

Yea, we have swerved and lagged,
Paltered and grossly bragged,
Heard Thee yet held us gagged
Weaponed hands weakly sagged,
Low through the dust have dragged
Faith in the Better Thing—
Naught ours Thou dost not bring:
Christ is the Britons' King.

III

Bruised in the Victory sent
Boon is that chastisement
If ta'en Thy Love's intent:
Wits with our Daring blent,
Blindness and Blundering spent,
Banned doltish Precedent,
System and Vision lent,
Mastery whate'er the Event.

IV

Comfort the agonized
Losing those idolized
Dear ones for whom the door
Never may open more:
Ocean-rent brothers met
Clasped in war's bloody sweat,
Heart with heart, hand in hand;
Where'er the widowed strand
Sons of one Motherland.

V

Deal them who hold the plow
Firm thews, unfaltering brow,
Through the fresh field Thou'st given
Straight be the furrow riven
Deep the keen coulter driven,
Thick sown the good seed there,
Tilled with unresting care—
Thine quickening rains and air—
From acres age-long bare
Garnered full Freedom fair.

VI

Grant us this weightiest need
Knowledge 'twas Thou indeed
Held the tough Boer to breed
Anguish and lives that bleed,
Shame, and the nations' greed;
Knowledge Thou hadst decreed
Harvest of bitter seed,
That, as Thou deign'st to speed,
Following we shall be freed,
Following we shall be drawn,
Nor Gold's nor Glory's pawn,
Purged to a fairer dawn;
Through gloom and lifting gray,
Gun-flash and battle-fray,
Hates' mockery, fools' dismay,
On to that Larger Day!

THE INSTRUMENT.

Confound thou not the Music with the reed
Through which 'tis poured; the Master's touch is there;
His breath is blown; His is the lovely air,
The noble harmony, live rhythm, the freed
Exultant rapture, soaring song; the Meed
His very own nor any man's; the rare
Effect, the thrilling resonance, the fair
Persuasion, barbed suggestion, thoughts that breed
Still keener thought wherewith to plow the heights
And sound the depths—are His, not mine, nor thine,
But His Whose mighty Hand majestic smites
Into poor human strings the tone divine,
Invests the darkling soul with shining lights,
And turns the laggard blood to potent wine.

A NOBLE LOVE.

A NOBLE LOVE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

HUGO, Count de St. Maur.
RAYMOND, Lord of Ver.
LIONEL DE TOESNI.
GERARD, Steward to Hugo.
DROGO, body-servant to Raymond.
BONTAINE, a physician.
STEPHEN, clerk and notary to Raymond.
BERNARDO, armourer to Hugo.
GILES, servant to Hugo.
ANSELMO, Prior at St. Michael's Mount.
THOMAS, Chancellor of the Monastery.
WITMUND, Almoner of the Monastery.
JANITOR, at the Monastery.
EUNONIA, daughter to Hugo.
BERTHALIND, her tire-woman.
Servants, Monks.

SCENE: Normandy. During first four acts, at Hugo's castle, St. Maur, near Avranches; during the fifth act, at the Monastery of Mount St. Michael, known as *Sancti Michaelis in periculo maris.*

SCENE I.—*Room in Count Hugo's castle.* GILES, *other Servants, and* GERARD.

Giles.—Is it true, then, good master Gerard?

Gerard.—Is it true, quotha? Is *what* true? *is* it true—or is it *true*? Go to, knave! thou hast no fine perception of logic and the moral art. Surely with so loose a tongue and doodle-brained a head thou wilt burn hereafter! Put thy question as a man, plainly, perspicaciously, compendiously; and as a man I will plainly, perspicaciously, and compendiously give answer.

Giles.—Faith, I did but ask a question!

Gerard.—There I do join issue—for thou didst *not* ask a question, but merely, as one may say, fumbled with thy tongue in the vain hope of making thyself understood. Why, hadst thou asked a question, I had answered thee by now.

Servant (*aside*).—There be new things under the sun, then—spite of the Preacher!

Giles.—Well, resolve me this—concerning which I have the curiosity of a long-tongued lass—

Gerard.—Resolve thee what?

Giles.—I am coming to it.

Gerard.—Thou art so long a-coming to it, that ere thou arrive I shall be gone; for Guy did just say our gracious lord was seeking me.

Giles.—Is it true, then, that our Lady Eunonia will wed with Sir Lionel?

Gerard.—God save the man! What conglomeration of ideas giveth vent to so fantastical a notion?

Giles.—Ideas? What be they? Nay, 'tis not ideas, but things I have seen as passing between them.

Gerard.—Giles, thou wert none so bad a fellow had thy mother forgotten to supply thee with eyes and speech; but even so, I doubt not, thou wouldst have smelt out impossibilities with thy nose! Yet, good Master Simpleton, knowst thou not that what thy mother pretermitted may even now be done by stout arms and iron?

Giles.—Save the mark, Master Gerard! I have not the meaning—

Gerard.—Nay, if thou hast not the meaning I am at one with thee; for there is no meaning in thy foolish question, and therefore I can not answer the same, because, seest thou, to give thine own meaning to another man's, he having none, were indeed a difficult thing.

Enter LIONEL DE TOESNI, *at back, he advances slowly, a red rose in one hand.*

Servant.—Hist! hist! See ye not where Sir Lionel cometh?

Gerard (*to Giles.*)—Hold thy foolish prate, thou limber-tongued chatter-me-much!

Lioncl.—Good Gerard, a word with thee.

Gerard.—A thousand, your worship. Stand away ye loons! Doth a gentleman like to open his heart before scullions?

Exeunt Giles and Servants.

Gerard.—Whence comest thou, Sir Lionel? an I may make so bold?

Lionel.—From a fencing-bout with the armourer; and, my faith! that same Spaniard hath an eagle's eye and a wrist of steel.

Gerard.—He saith the same of your worship, and glad am I to hear it, for that same wrist of thine must e'en carve a fortune in the wars.

Lionel.—True, true! ere this I should have joined our army in the field, but—but—

Gerard.—Silken jesses bind the falcon.

Lionel.—Ay, my good friend; still doth Count Hugo chide
"Young man, away! thy place is now the field!
War's loud alarum calleth thee afar,
Where hosts embattled wage grim toil. To arms!
To arms!", and I say nothing to his cry,
But vow to answer with a mighty deed
Of valour, which shall lift me to the skies
Of fair renown and well-won fame—anon.

Gerard.—Anon? tarry no longer! I have watched thee well
And, cared I to be cruel, now could crush
The fond hope burning in thy soul. Seek not
In idle peace the work of manhood; they
Who rule the world know not the name of peace.

Lionel.—Ere the young moon wax big I will away
And equal Raymond in the path of war!

Gerard.—There breathed Toesni's noble soul!

Lionel.— Gerard!

Gerard.—What is't?

Lionel.— Did our fair lady pass this place?

Gerard.—Not since the morning.

Lionel.— Whither can she have stol'n?

Gerard.—Nay, nay, forbear, Sir Lionel; seek her not!
Linger no longer by Eunonia here—

The daughter of St Maur—wouldst be her mate
Ere thou hast dwelt in camps and mixed with men?

Lionel.—Nay, only this—the first rose of the Spring
I swore, when Winter reigned, to find and bear
Unto her. Lo! an Empress 'mid the flowers!
I yearn to watch it pale upon her heart!
Methinks I see her floating robes! thy slave,
Peerless Eunonia, hastens to thy feet!

Exit LIONEL *impulsively.*

Gerard.—O Youth, and Hope, and Love, and Foolery!
Why can I not plain language to this boy?
Why should I let his ardent passions grow
With fatal strength until they thrust him o'er
The precipice, when with a single word
His airy castles may be tumbled down?
True friendship alway dares to deal an ill,
So that the ill of good productive be;
Yet here I stumble, though the need is plain,
Too tender! When the blow should fall, instead
Comes back again his dying sire's entreaty,
"Be ever kind to him, Gerard, and Heaven
Will bless thee; ay, for Hugo hath his own!"
Young Lionel found another father, I
Another master—let that master strike,
'Tis but his right! in me 'twere impudence.

SCENE II:—*The Same.*

Enter COUNT HUGO *and* RAYMOND.

Raymond.—Ha, friend Gerard! how runs the world with thee
This cheerful Spring-time?

Gerard.— Evenly, my lord,
For he who in these kindly walls is lodged
Hath all old men may carry.
Hugo.— Tush, Gerard!
I am thine elder, yet since Lord Raymond here
Hath shone upon us from the world of war,
I seem to gather strength and youth, and long
To break a lance with any knight alive.
Gerard.—Yea, my good lord? in truth I may believe
Thou dost so hunger, but Gaffer-with-the-scythe
Hath marked his heavy signet on thy brow,
And shrivelled all the sinews of thine arm,
And dried the sap and marrow of thy bones,
And pinched thy breath, and only made addition
To thy well-rounded paunch.
Hugo.— Sirrah, thou liest! I
As yet am stout a man as any alive!
Ho! ho! ... lend me thine arm, good fellow; how
This cough doth nip me!
Gerard.— I told thee thus 'twould be
If thou shouldst intermit thy morning posset.
Hugo.—Be silent, blabber! But a spasm—and past.
Raymond.—I'faith the enemy gripped thee sore. Alas!
Why must we age with age, nor e'er withstand
The sure revenges of long-suffering Time!
Hugo.—Gerard, pray get thee gone—thou dost so clipped
Of calf, so reft of health, so wizen'd of arm,
So coughing-full, and big of belly appear,
That I with mere beholding shall become
Like to thyself, an aged, white-bearded carle.
Nay, go—the good Lord Raymond and myself
Have much to speak of, and would be alone.

Gerard.—Farewell. God keep ye both, my lords!
Hugo.— Amen.

Exit GERARD.

Ha, seest thou now how use and habit creep
On suffered custom till this blanched Gerard
Doth deem himself as good a man as I!
Raymond.—Why, comrade, dear, no younger do we grow;
My grizzle-beard lies not so to my face.
Hugo.—Tush! what art thou but stripling? Well I mind
When we rode forth together from these gates,
First tasting war, a sturdy knight and squire.
Raymond.—But that's a tale of seven and twenty years!
And knowst thou not that when five winters more
Shall cast their snows upon this frosty head
Their sum will number half a century?
Hugo.—Talk not to me of grizzle-beards and heads!
Why, if thou numberest half a thousand years
Yet keep thine own and wear green heart within,
The fiend himself dare never call thee old.
Ay, though thou wert the baldest-pated knave
Who ever strove to eat an apple with bare gums!
Raymond.—How firm a front! Twigs from a dying oak!
As thou dost will, dear Hugo; let us grow
But younger as the merry years pass on;
And if Gerard or other ancient clown
Should sourly swear that Time will not release
A single atom from his insatiate maw
For thee, for me, for any, I will vow
He hath knocked his head against the moon, and views
Our youth and freshness with a lunatic eye!
But what was this great business thou didst plead

As answer when I asked thee forth to breathe
The halesome morning air?

Hugo.— Raymond the Soldier!
But three days loosed from the long drag of war
And wouldst be vaulting charger-back? No rest
From care and stratagem and war-worn hours
Hath blest thee since twelve years ago we came
Together here—thou the new general, I
Eased by our King of service in the field.

Raymond.—'Tis true, yet glorying in the fate which made
My life as thou hast pictured, war and toil
Became a second nature, and were borne
As easily as are the stormy winds
By the lone bird of ocean.

Hugo.— Hast thou forgot
Old friend, my little maid, thy bride?

Raymond.— My bride?
Thy little maid?

Hugo.— What! art thou dazed, and gape
On me astonished?

Raymond.— Hugo; my bride, sayest thou?
Thy words do stun me with amazement! I
Have never sought nor wooed a woman, save
Bellona.

Hugo.— Give good leave—our places change;
So I am younger, thou the elder grown;
And through twelve summers Memory leadeth back
And in unfading beauty paints thy bride.

Raymond.—Why, did not I but late recall the time
When seven and twenty years ago we rode
Away together?

Hugo.— Then torn in halves,
Or broken-kneed, or winded, or besmirched

With dust and fury of the fight, thy mind
Hath lost the count of circumstances when
Alone thou wendedst hence and left me here.

Raymond.—What is't? ... I know ...

Hugo.— Dear dullard, have I jogged
The remnant of thy recollection hoar?
Most ancient gentleman, my youthful sides
Would split in laughter at thy working face.

Raymond.—True! true! O what an oaf, a dolt am I!
Eunonia, on my soul! That darling child
Who placed her hand in mine, and gazed with large,
Deep eyes in wondering ignorance at the scene!
Hugo, forgive me if I slighted thee.
By the fair heavens above, 'twas clean forgot!
Still, I have marked no child within thine house!

Hugo.—A child? Whence dost thou think our women grow?
May twelve long years pass o'er her head and leave
My daughter as they found her? Though a child—
I bless the Father for it—she remains
In all the pure and innocent things which make
A heaven of childhood to the hearts of men.

Raymond.—In truth she must be woman grown by this.

Hugo.—Why, Raymond, art thou blind! Nay, that's an eye
As clear, unshrinking as my falcon's.

Raymond.— Blind?
Yes, I am blind, or have been blind; for now
I do remember, in the banquet-hall
But yestereve, she sat beside me—yet
Most strenuous effort fails to repossess
My blurr'd perceptions, of her form,
Her voice, her features, nor a trace nor tone!

Hugo.—Ah, Raymond, spite of protestation, thou
Hast left thy heart with some high dame afar,
And if she be not imaged, trusty sight
Will limn no picture of another.

Raymond.— No!
But sudden change from busy war to these
Sweet ways of peace is all too great as yet
For mind and body, which, familiar grown
With life and action utterly unlike,
Oft fail to apprehend the present—take
No thought together, nor make due response;
So that the eye may see and yet neglect
To send her message to the wandering brain:
Or, if the brain receive, 'twill be with doubt
The impression is mere visual prankishness.

Hugo.—In the same fashion 'twas with me when first
I left the camp for quiet hours at home.
Waked by the warder's horn, in haste would don
My coat of mail and clank along the hall
Ere my dazed senses overtook the fault;
Or from my meat rise sudden, and sharply cry,
"Pack up the baggage! We shift our camp to-night."
And send bewildered serving-men to bear
My captains orders for the coming brunt!
But this will quickly wear. Now do I claim
The due fulfilment of thy knightly vow.
The reasons which twelve years ago were pressed
On my too anxious mind resistless grow
As nears the journey every man must take.

Raymond.—Dear Hugo, all too sadly dost thou view
The prospect of thine honourable age.

Why thou'rt as good a man as I myself,
And hast a lusty look and wilt live long!

Hugo.—If thou didst hold the tenure of my life
It might be as thou sayest; not for myself
But for Eunonia do I dread the change.
She safe with thee, then, come what may, I care not.

Raymond.—Wouldst have me wed her, Hugo?

Hugo.— Surely, yes!
She is a woman grown and sweetly blest
With all her lovely mother's beauty—pure
As angels are—a gem of womanhood.

Raymond.—But I am old.

Hugo.— I am thine elder far,
And yet not very old; still art thou young
In all which makes the manhood of a man.

Raymond.—So long a consonance with my life as 'tis
Hath left no skill of wooing, nor desire
To mate and have a double being—half mine,
Half hers—

Hugo.— What need for thee to woo? therein
Her father's wish sufficeth!

Raymond.— Yet, bethink,
She may not will a wedding. I have heard
That maids do sometimes hate the sight of man.

Hugo.—Excuse me no excuses! as for that,
Why, she most constantly with Lionel is,
Nor, to my knowledge, ever hath complained
Of his most frequent presence!

Raymond.— Pledged am I—
If thou art fixed on this, my bride shall be
Thy fair Eunonia; yet 'tis a mighty chance
That one so rugged, plain, and soldier-like
Should please her changing fancy!

Hugo.— Wilt thou not
Yield without murmur? By my father's bones
An thou dost love her not when thou hast marked
The splendid graces which are all her own—
More fully than thy stranger eye yet knows;
If thou shouldst love her not, nor further yearn
To sip the sweets which open to thy hand,
Then I absolve thee from thy promise given
To ease my soul in bitter days of dread,
And thou shalt stand released from knightly troth.

Raymond.—Be it as thou dost say, O generous heart!

Hugo.—Let us go find her now, and I will speak
To her of thee.

Raymond.— Do thou go first, old friend,
And I anon will follow: let me taste
The morning air and feel again the breeze;
'Twill give me grace to stand before a dame.

Hugo.—Go then, but tarry not—we shall await
Thy coming in the pictured gallery.

Exeunt severally.

SCENE III.—*Long Pictured Gallery in Count Hugo's Castle.*
EUNONIA, *discovered.*

Eunonia.—I wonder where may Lionel be? Whose hand
Hath plucked my beauteous rose, the first rose born
To Spring? My rose! my rose of roses! mine
For Lionel. Have I not watched alone the bud
Slow forming on the tender shoot, and swell
Day after day until it burst to flower!
Have I not nursed it as a sister might?
Sheltered from storm, and frost, and wind, and rain?
And all to lose it when perfection came
And crowned its blushing petals—crowned it king

Of roses' rose-land—sovran of the flowers!
Lionel was with me when I spied it first
Just venturing on the bough, a tiny round
Of green scarce large enough to see. He swore
By all the pretty gods of Love to pluck
And bring me soon the first rose of the Spring.
But I in very wilfulness did cry
"Nay, for the blossomy prize shall be my gift
To thee—thou shalt forswear thyself!". And he,
He laughed and chided me in tender guise,
And vowed I dared not 'mid the bramble press,
Or they would straight enfold me in their arms
And charm me to a dryad of the forest.
But well I marked the treasure, nor did guide
By any look of mine his questioning gaze.
He saith that ere the young moon grow a sphere
He will depart and quickly equal Raymond—
That sad, stern man whose visage only tells
Of stormy war, and toil, and statesmanship—
For time is ripe that he should prove himself
To be the head of Toesni's regal line,
And have the attainder thrown o'er name and state
Reversed by deeds of daring in the field.
Ah me, what pity 'tis! why can he not
Remain at rest within our peaceful walls.
How I do love him! When he goes, who then
Will make this castle fairest spot on earth,
And days glide quickly by that scarce they tell
What may be morn, or noon, or eventide!
That rose! whose hand hath plucked the lovely thing?

Enter LIONEL, *drawing nearer from behind with the rose in his hand.*

Lost flower, like my lost mother dost thou seem,
Thy beauty viewed by others, not by me.

Lionel.—(*giving her the rose*).

Then gaze thy fill, let beauty look on beauty!
Dearest Eunonia, 'tis the Spring's first rose!

Eunonia.—(*surprised*). Lionel! . . . my rose?

Lionel.— Thy rose indeed, fair saint;
How fairer far than this the gem of all
Fair roses!

Eunonia.— The Spring's first rose?

Lionel.— Did I not swear
While each sweet flower by wintry snows was prisoned
To find, when Spring should come, her first red rose
And bear it thee? Dost thou forget mine oath?

Eunonia.—Dost thou forget I promised thee forsworn?

Lionel.—Could I forget a single word which falls
From those pure lips! O, hear me Heaven above,
And rain black ravin on my head if e'er
I do forget!

Eunonia.— Whence didst thou gain the rose?

Lionel.—There where the gnarled oak bends nigh o'er the brook,
Straight from the ladies' postern. Often we
Have lingered by the place and lost all count
Of time, our spirits bowed beneath the charm
Of glory heaped o'er land and sky and sea.
This morn in search of thee I hastened thither,
And as my seeking glance went wandering round,
I marked a lovely blossom pressing her cheek
Against the chamfered bosom of the tree,
And therewith rushed upon my soul the vow
So happily made to thee. I seized the bloom—

Sheltered within a hollow of the rind
And nursed as 'twere by some enguarding fay
From wind and battering rain—"Eunonia's rose!"
I cried, as in my grasp it lay, "the first
Rose of the Spring! I pluck thee for thy queen,
O favoured blossom, and fulfil my vow."
And all the morning since,—within the wall—
Without,—I sought thee, nor could find—as one
Who galled by darkness deems the sun is dead.

Eunonia.—O Lionel, dost thou know how long I watched
This truant bloom and twined it on the bole,
That its fair face should all unfretted be
When from my hand thou hadst received it?

Lionel.— Heavens!
Had I but known! what bliss!

Eunonia.— Forlornly I
Reached after thee that oak and missed my rose,
And far and wide I searched if haply one
Fair brother had opened to the early Spring—
But not a bud hath bloomed save this.

Lionel.— I found
The rose for thee yet lost it for myself!
Then place it o'er thy heart, there let it die
In envy of the hues it may not wear.

She places it in her bosom

While I shall die in envy of the rose!

Eunonia.—The sun hath loved this blossom.

Lionel.— Even he,
All-loving one, for thy dear sake hath been
A partial lover, and, as thou hadst made
That sweet flower holy by thy care, compelled
Perfection while her sisters wait unblown.

Eunonia.—The sun would scorn thy fable—Hark! me-seems
My father calleth.

Makes as if going.

Lionel.— Echoes! stay awhile
O gentlest of St. Maur's exalted race!
Why hast thou shunned me these three cruel days
Last gone?

Eunonia.— Art thou not hastening hence? 'tis well
That thou shouldst have foretaste of absence, I
Do deem it most commodious withal!

Lionel.—So lovely and unkind!

Eunonia.— Sir Lionel,
Shouldst thou not welcome counsel which would send thee
Thus gallantly to stirring scenes of war;
Would bind no longer to the lazy wheel
Of laggard hours thy courage and desire?

Lionel.—(*aside*)—Till now, I dreamt she loved me!

Eunonia.— Here, one day
Like to another passeth, there, each hour
Teems with new accident and gathers force
Of deed and triumph; here, my father, I,
And Berthalind, with some score men-at-arms,
Make all the comrades told thy ardent soul
May know; while princes, in the camp, shall throng
To press thy hand in friendship, and high dames
Joy in thy prowess and sing thy praise at court!

Lionel.—(*aside*)—Bitter is wintry blast in summer-time!

Eunonia.—In this dull castle foes may ne'er be found;
But there, like Raymond, thy right hand shall flag
Only with fill of slaying enemies

In e'er increasing tale; while here—save one,
Or two, perhaps—the people all do love thee!

Lionel.—(*aside*)—Why, is the mild Eunonia she who speaks?

Eunonia.—What canst thou be in this my father's house
But young Sir Lionel, hardly more than boy?
While, with bright fame and glittering honours won,
The groaning earth shall shrink beneath thy tread;
Go and be great! they win who durst adventure!

Lionel.—Amazement floods my senses, for thy words—
Breathing of war, and slaughter, and camp, and court—
Semble thy former self as doth the eagle
Some nest-abiding dovelet.

Eunonia.—(*aside*)— What have I done?

Lionel.—He lives not on the earth nor ever lived,
Who, hearing thee, could for a moment's flash
Think or do aught but rush into the field!
With thee for Mentor, Horace had not turned
From red Philippi, while Alexander's arm
Scorning to rule this pigmy world, had swift
Bridged the abysses and conquered all the stars.

Eunonia.—(*aside*)—O, what a fire this hateful tongue hath lit!

Lionel.—'S 'death, I would league with Satan to find wings
That might this instant bear me to the fight!

Eunonia.—(*aside*)—Alas! he thinks of me no more.

Lionel.— What joy
To press among the charging squadrons! bliss,
To bury deep within a foeman's throat
My father's trusty sword! Glory and War
These are the things for which a man should live!

Away with calm content and idleness!
Shall I rust here while Fortune may be won?
Thanks, take, sweet Eunonia, my eternal thanks,
For thou hast pointed with no faltering hand
To duty and the path which lies before.
O, foul befall my foolishness, that I
So long have struggled 'gainst Count Hugo's wish
To join the brave Lord Raymond!

Eunonia.— Where is need
Of such a sudden haste?

Lionel.— Need? why the heavens,
The very heavens and all the earth, cry shame
On lagging! There is nothing now to bind
Me longer here.

Eunonia.— What! nothing?—nothing here?

Lionel.—O, 'tis the basest of ingratitude
To say so! Ten long years of peace beneath
The holy shade of these ancestral towers
Bear witness of a friendship strong as death,
Of loving hearts, of gracious presences,
Of all that could enchain a boy to home!
Ay, and the home is mine, although a stranger
I gained this portal fresh from a father's arms.
For havened here, scarce have my youthful eyes
Turned back to childhood's dim, familiar things,
And in thy father mine hath lived again.

Eunonia.—O happy thus! why shouldst thou ever change?

Lionel.—Honour and Duty call me, though their call
Was nigh forgotten until it thrilled through thee.

Eunonia.—The wayward folly of a maiden's tongue!

Lionel.—Yet if it chime with my resolve?

Eunonia.— Be sure
That thy resolve is not a right resolve,

For like to like doth cleave; if therefore I
Do falsehood speak in very wilfulness,
Flee the conclusions which may hang thereon;
And shouldst thou have a purpose seemingly
Built up by such a falseness, quick resign it!

Lioncl.—But I have sworn to old Gerard that ere
The young moon waxes big I would away.

Eunonia.—Gerard did tell me, yet thou knowest well
I promised thee forsworn on this dear rose!
And seeing thou hast made me perjured thus,
Let me be perjured in thy company,
Be thou my fellow-sinner!

Lioncl.— Were I man
And scorn such union? Oaths and promises,
Eunonia breaks your bondage! Sinner-saint,
Give me full absolution for the deed.

Eunonia.—What absolution can a sinner give
Who needeth absolution as thyself?

Lioncl.—Eunonia, look on me a penitent
Imploring pardon, that my erring mind
Failed to discern when thou didst bid me go
Thou trulier badst me stay!

Eunonia.— I bid thee stay?

Lionel.—Sweet banterer, have thou mercy on my soul!

Enter COUNT HUGO *at back of gallery.*

SCENE IV.—*The Same.*

Hugo.—Eunonia!

Eunonia.— Here am I, my father.

Hugo.— Child,
May the bright heavens bestow their benison
And shield thy gentle head from earthly storms!

Were my poor will a fate-compelling power
Then shouldst thou never know a moment's pain!
Eunonia.—Dear father, if the time to come is blest
As hath the happy past been by thy love,
Life's truer sunshine waits me.
Hugo.— Ah, my girl,
I have no charm to bind the eager hours,
And green leaves must replace the fallen brown.
Yet there are some who scorn the touch of Time
Nor yield one tittle to his leeching hand.
See the Lord Raymond now, how strong a soul,
How firm, how upright, how divorced from all
That tells of human frailness; such an one
Stands like a rock above the whirling foam,
Daring the rage which shattereth weaker stuff—
To speak of him I sought thee—
Lionel.— Dear my lord,
Shall I be gone?
Hugo.— O, 'tis no secret—stay—
It may concern thee, for thy warlike plans
Must be delayed; in brief, an end unthought
Is made to the long campaign. What seemed a truce
When Raymond left the field—mere breathing-time—
Hath grown assurèd peace, so the good king
But now advised our loving friend; and he,
Delight of all my days! in token of old love
And bonds of amity between us fixed,
Will serve his fair apprenticeship to peace
Within these walls—a brother and son in one.
Lionel.—'Tis a rare honour that so mighty a man

Pays to thy house, dear lord; and surely ne'er
Have nobler hearts in nobler friendship beat.
Eunonia.—Alas!
Hugo.— How now, Eunonia, hast no smile?
Eunonia.—Though the Lord Raymond had not met these eyes
Since I a tender child looked up with awe
Unto his glittering helm and dancing plume,
And placed a tiny hand within his gauntlet,
His name is dreadful to me.
Hugo.— Glory stamps
Such greatness on some mortals, that a maid
Living afar from bustle of camp or court
Quakes when a name is told!
Lionel.—(*aside*)— Now am I glad
I have not won such greatness!
Hugo.— When thou'rt wed,
My daughter, Raymond shall be dear as e'er
Was lord to lady.
Eunonia.— Wed? .... my father! what
Is this?
Lionel.—(*aside*)—My God! what horror holds me palsied!
Hugo.—Wed did I say, and wedded do I mean—
For thou, though even a child, wert bound to him
In fast betrothal at my side.
Eunonia.— What? No!
My father! art thou dreaming? .... am I mad?
Hugo.—Tush, girl, these maiden wiles are all too clear,
For graybeards know the inconstant sex, and shun
To lean on such a reed. Young Lionel, mark!
When thou hast won a bride, be not so long
In wedding. See ye now, her wits have clean
Forgot her plighted lord.

Eunonia.—(*to Lionel*)— O Lionel! Lionel!
Lionel.—(*to Eunonia*)— My love, I trust thee!—
Hugo.— When this unhappy war
Broke out twelve years ago, my place was where
The foeman smote his fiercest—mine by right.
Her mother passed beyond to Paradise,
My only fear was for the little maid
Orphaned within the castle. Then our arms
After a twelvemonth's fighting forced a truce.
Blessing the respite, Raymond and myself
Together journeyed here. I pondered much
On all the chances of a soldier's life
And straightway, he being younger than myself
By fifteen years, asked Raymond to be lord
Of this, my little maid. Though such a thing
Did raise his laughter, in sheer knightliness
He gave consent; for I bethought me, should
My blood be spilt in war, nor kith nor kin
Hath she, my little maid, to shield and bless.
When thou hast children, Lionel, thou mayst know
What shuddering through a parent's heart will run,
As Fancy pictures dear ones left all lonely.
Praise be to God! our king did me relieve
From further service in the field; but they,
My child and Raymond, plighted lord and spouse
Were bound, and so must ever bound remain.
Lionel.—O God! the day is dark!
Eunonia.— Still mine, my love!

RAYMOND *enters up the gallery.* HUGO *moves back towards him.*

Hugo.—Here comes Lord Raymond; he shall speak for himself.

Eunonia.—O Lionel, I am innocent of this!
Lionel.—Did not thy father tell thee?
Eunonia.— But as a jest
He would, when in a merry humour, say
"How now, Lord Raymond's lady?" On my soul,
I deemed it but a jest—a jest—a jest!
Hugo (*to Raymond.*—What think you?
Raymond.— I have been a dolt, a dull
Decaying idiot, and blind mole! Have I seen
Her lovely features, and not on bended knee
Bowed low in adoration? O divine
In beauty, blossomed to perfect womanhood,
Yet wearing all a gentle maiden's grace!
Can she indeed be mine?
Hugo.— Dost want release
From knightly troth?
Raymond.— Nor heaven nor hell shall tear
Her from me!
Hugo.— She is waiting, all thine own!
Eunonia.—Oh make me mad, dear God, or slay me else!
Raymond.—(*to Eunonia*)—Sweet lady, may I dare to kiss
thy hand,
In hope thou dost remember me?
Eunonia.— My lord—
My father—Lionel—I— (*She swoons.*)

RAYMOND *supports her.*

Lionel.— Oh, ye have slain her!
Hugo.—Tush, boy, be not so forward! She hath
swooned
O'erjoyed to hear thee, Raymond.
Raymond.— Why so blest!
Love, Joy, and Peace in one, within mine arms!

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Another room in Count Hugo's Castle.*
Enter BERTHALIND.

Berthalind.—Our affections are perfect tyrants, for run contrary to them in the smallest degree, they quickly rise in open rebellion, depose our reason, and reign in his stead, with a plentiful sprinkling of tears, whirlwind of sighs, tempest of protestations, and vows foolish though earnest, till the devil himself knows not how to calm the hurricane. Women are notably the most discreet and silent of all mortals, and yet, what think you! doth my young mistress these last three days, but moan in mine ear, "O Berthalind, an he wed me I shall die!"? Proper insanity, forsooth! the Lord Raymond being a passable man, indeed, for a man who is, as a body may say, of a certain age. Yet what are years when the gentleman hath high rank? a grizzle-beard when he is wealthy? or ugliness, if his blood be blue? Nothing to a woman of wit: they are but signs of a speedy release, and speak a larger promise than any he can make by word of mouth. O Fortune, what a multitude of faults dost thou cover! Were Lord Raymond a blackamoor and wanted a wife, I know some one who would not wail, "An he wed me I shall die!" Still, poor lady, she means it, and there's the difference. She can not mould herself to circumstances, nor hath the wisdom to perceive when she is best bestowed. This is the disadvantage of being a lady born and bred, for they get such finnicking and fine fancies that any ordinary man may not come within ten mile. I thank God I am

not proud, and so long as the lad loves me and is honest he shall not call me unkind. If a perverse inclination should ever cast me into the arms of a sweetheart, I will e'en be contented, nor seek to scratch his face. 'Tis strange that my lady should be so distraught, and show me such a poor, dark-ringed eye to look at the golden sun withal; and yet it is not strange, when one thinks how from childhood she hath played with young Sir Lionel, and given him her heart ere she knew she had one. But Sir Lionel is poor and hath no renown, while Lord Raymond hath castles of his own and is famous. The youngster hath no chance against the oldster, while, God love her, my Lady Eunonia may not choose between them, because her father, Count Hugo, hath chosen for her. As to that, being more unable than men to make their likes and dislikes known, it is questionable whether women do ever choose their husbands. It goeth hard with a woman, though, if, after marriage, he who hath chosen her discovers himself mistaken in so choosing. Wherefore, meseemeth best to so encourage and wheedle the man preferred that, will-he nill-he, he shall become your chooser, but a chosen chooser. Thus, i' faith, he simply, as your mouth-piece, asks himself to marry you, by asking you to marry him. Yet if other folk choose where you would not, and their choice must be held, 'tis like swimming a river with a strange pair of legs where drowning more surely follows than salvation. Hark! I know that slouching step, crawling along as if ashamed to leave its brother clod; 'tis Giles, who hath the presumption of a man-at-arms without any other

quality, good or bad, to recommend or condemn him.

Enter GILES.

Giles.—God save you, Mistress Berthalind. My master, Sir Lionel, hath despatched me with a message for the Lady Eunonia, which, if I do not err, she shall find in this letter.

Hands her the letter. She refuses to take it.

Berthalind.—She shall find it verily if thou dost take it to her.

Giles.—Nor will she read it worse because thy fair fingers bear it.

Berthalind.—(*taking the letter*)—Thus is it ever with us women—we refuse, and straightway consent for no better reason.

Giles.—I dare not speak to our lady.

Berthalind.—Dare not? why? where is saneness in this?

Giles.—Nay, saneness is wanting, for Sir Lionel hath gone clean stark, staring mad!

Berthalind.—Mad? thou art raving thyself!

Giles.—An I be raving, for I do not contradict thee, seeing I am sorely perturbed and unavoidably cum-puffled; but an I be raving, O Heaven, preserve my master!

Berthalind.—Thy master's man hath sorer need of preserving—in an iron cage, as a show of what unchecked foolishness may become.

Giles.—Nay, sweet mistress, look not so on me, it blotteth out thy former kindness, nor helpeth me to be calm.

Berthalind.—Save the mark! what hath happened? Be rational an thou canst.

Giles.—I can not be as rational as I would, nor wouldst thou be as rational as I can, if the like had happened to thee.

Berthalind.—Saints preserve us! hast thou seen a ghost?

Ciles.—Worse than all ghosts, Mistress Berthalind.

Berthalind.—What hast thou seen?

Giles.—I have seen Sir Lionel come to this resolve—that secretly and suddenly, even ere the morrow, and alone save for the companionship of your humble bondman he would, without word of warning to a single soul, depart from this castle to go seek his fortune in far lands, ay, even to England. Moreover, he did put me on my bible-oath not to tell a living mortal, which oath I had certainly kept, an I had not met thee. Is not that madness? profane, unholy madness?

Berthalind.—Dost thou know what madness is?

Giles.—Do I know? do I know, sayst thou? Why, look, you, here sitteth Sir Lionel, there stand I. "Giles," saith he, in a miserable, melancholy voice, "Dost thou love me, Giles?" "Ay, truly," saith I, "I love your worship a deal better than I love myself, and would follow your worship the wide world over." This out of the abundance of my affectionate disposition, for I was ever soft about the heart, Mistress Berthalind, and never dreaming for one moment he would so disadvantageously and maraudderingly take me at my word. "Then Giles," saith he, "canst thou keep a secret?" "A secret," saith I, "yea, that can I better even than a woman." "Then Giles," saith he, "I will tell thee one." And so he told me how he would steal away in the early

morning—he leaving a letter for my Lord Hugo—go into far lands—ay, even to England; do, God knows what prodigious deeds of valour, and come back, never perhaps, but famous knight and henchman whenever we did appear. If this be not madness, then am I a jackass indeed!

Berthalind.—In that is little madness, unless sound sense and fine discretion be twin brothers thereto.

Giles.—What? dost thou approve, Mistress Berthalind,—knowing well, that except in hard necessity, I have no stomach for fighting?

Berthalind.—Thou hast a huge stomach for eating—let each man use his natural gifts; Sir Lionel will not leave thee much fighting, I warrant.

Giles.—No soul of Adam may doubt my valour!

Berthalind.—No soul of Adam knoweth the unknown; yet art thou valiant in thine own way—pot-valiant.

Giles.—Dost thou flout me, Mistress Berthalind? thou mayst discern that 'tis the agony of leaving thee behind which so unmans me.

Berthalind.—I may discern so much; yet it scarce needeth mention, perchance, that to be unmanned, thou oughtest to have had manliness first of all.

Giles.—Come, Mistress Berthalind, speak in kindliness to me; thou mayst never see me again.

Berthalind.—Good fortune blesseth me not so easily! Sir Lionel is to be commended; for, look you, why should he languish here for a lady who, poor soul, must wed another! the world being wide, and other maidens as fair?

Giles.—There are no two maidens fair as our Lady Eunonia and thyself, howsoever wide the world may be.

Berthalind.—Women are alike everywhere—most of them tolerable, some intolerable, with here and there a beauty. I would back the world against this old castle, and the world would win.

Giles.—I am not so certain.

Berthalind.—Why shouldst thou be? thou wert ever uncertain.

Giles.—Yet in one thing have I been certain.

Berthalind.—Prithee, what may that thing be?

Giles.—That I loved thee.

Berthalind.—Loved me? why shouldst thou not? I have never done thee harm!

Giles.—Nay, in a less brotherly way than that, a deeper, a more enduring way, a marrying way in truth.

Berthalind.—Giles, were we to marry, one of us would starve.

Giles.—Thou shouldst never starve, Mistress Berthalind!

Berthalind.—I should starve, I tell thee, for the lack of a reasonable human being with whom to converse; thou wouldst be so jealous, that never a man could be spoken to save thyself.

Giles.—Well, Mistress Berthalind, I did hope to have met with kindness at thy hands, since this is a leave-taking.

Berthalind.—So long as 'tis not taking without leave, I am happy.

Giles.—Why?

Berthalind.—Thou mightest have taken a kiss, whereat I should have been most horribly affronted.

Giles.—And am I not most mannerly, never attempting what I know thou wouldst not like?

Berthalind.—How dost thou know, blockhead?

Giles.—Blockhead? blockhead? Ah! .. I take thee! If I meet as fair a lass, dost thou know what I will do?

Berthalind.—Nay, I cannot even guess.

Giles.—Kiss her!

Kisses her.

Berthalind.—Begone, Master Impudence! O Giles, I am sad thou art going.

Giles.—Thou art not half so sad as I.

Berthalind.—Yet stay not over long away, for Bernardo, the armourer, hath asked me, and 'tis like I may wed him if thou art too late.

Giles.—Then will I make thee a widow, and marry Bernardo's wife.

Footsteps within.

Berthalind.—Hush, some one is coming!

Giles.—Another kiss, if I die for it!

Berthalind.—Farewell, Giles; farewell, simpleton!

Giles.—Farewell, thou torturer! Sweetheart, farewell! well!

Exeunt.

Scene II.—*Outside Count Hugo's Castle Wall, by the Ladies' Postern. A taper is seen burning high up in Eunonia's apartment.*

Raymond *discovered beneath, looking up at the lattice.*

Raymond.—Fair Saint, may heavenly guardians watch thy rest
And bring thee dreams which breathe of Paradise.
Oh, I will feed on hope, and glut desire
With vain belief that ere the morrow come—
When I perchance may see thee—cruel hours

Which intervene will flee as if my wish
Were lord of Time, and could annihilate
The separating ocean and make the morn!
God! ere the morn can come, the tedious moon
Must drag her weary way across the sky,
And mock me with her glittering stare and seek
To wrench my faith, that so I should conceive
The honest sunbeams phantasy, and her light
The only light which shineth. And as yet
She hath not risen! Eunonia! Eunonia!
That name for Raymond holds the Heaven of heavens.
Yet, wonderful, 'twas but an empty word—
A shadow—a fable—nothingness—a note
Blown on the wind and never heard again,
Three days ago! Three days ago! who's he
Would measure days thus evenly? Are all
Our days alike? Shall we take up the faggot
Of Time and lop to a calendar'd length and bind?
I have but lived three days! my former life
Was but the chaos from which may come Creation—
A petty mass of years, where not one hour
Was ever raised above the vulgar round
Of common duties; myself, some patient beast
Born in a darkened pit, and groping pleased
To touch the slimy sides, as deeming them
The vast horizon of a limitless realm.
But now, like the blended light of mated stars,
My life shall shine in double splendour, full
And calm, unthreatened by the touch of pain,
The hand of malice, or the spite of chance.
Superior, in an orbit circling high
Above the experiences of meaner souls,

We two will grow together in love, and find
In every change and season perfect joy.

The chapel bell rings; some monks pass at the back of the stage to complines.

Ha, who are they? Blind moles who burrow deep
In church and monastery, and thrust away
All that belongs to honest manliness.

The moon rises. Enter FATHER ANSELMO.

Again that friar, and since the morning thrice
I came upon him mumbling prayers, or rapt
In contemplation; such a man enshrouds
The bravery of the world in winding-sheets.
Why doth he cross my path?

Anselmo.— Benedicite,
Fair son! Art thou a-thinking how that orb,
Which rises through the vast, and all the earth,
Its pomp and circumstance, shall melt like wax
Before the breath of Him the Maker?

Raymond.— No!
Frankly, on my soul, good father, I had thought
Of how most beauteous of most beauteous things
Is the same mother Earth of ours.

Anselmo.— Vanity!
All is vanity! vain thy thought! is it not writ?
And doth not Nature herself, responding, teach?

Raymond.—We do not read the signs alike; no faith
Have I that disbelief in all the beauty
Of beauty is right or true. Shall I assume
That He Who placeth bliss within mine arms
Is working false, and saith, "Enjoy it not!
What seemeth bliss is black, unending woe."?

Are then my senses cheats? Their heaven-made use
To judge that That which Is, is That which is Not?

Anselmo.—Then I as man to man may answer thee,
That when my senses whisper, "These are good",
Or "These are lovely—these beyond compare"
Of aught existing on the sinful earth;
My soul replies—and she is true as thine—
"In this life is there nothing good, and when
They seem the lovelier most to be abhorr'd."

Raymond.—Thy pardon, father, if I should affront—
But how canst thou in fairness judge of these
Same sinful things? How art thou fit to be
My monitor when all thy world is pent
Within the walls of church or monastery;
When life with thee is but the life of those
Who, shrinking from high duty, selfishly
Put by their manhood, and are content to gaze
Through cloistral sanctuaries at the fight afar—
Proud that though in the world they are not of it!
Yet, should a wordling as myself come nigh,
Judge what they know not to be 'vanity'!

Anselmo.—Dost thou remember Ralpho Gonsalamos?

Raymond.—Ralpho Gonsalamos the Lombard? Well;
He was the only man who ever crossed
A lance with mine, and bore away the meed—
His country's noblest soldier! We shall meet,
I have sworn it, we shall meet again, and then—

Anselmo.—He will, one hand on thine as mine is now,
Declare this life is naught but vanity,
For *I* was once Ralpho Gonsalamos.

Raymond.—Ralpho Gonsalamos?

Anselmo.—(*throwing back his cowl*)—Mark well.

Raymond.— Great God!

Anselmo.—Ralpho Gonsalamos is dead to all
Which makes our being what it seems; he drained
The cup of life to the dregs and found it—death.
(*Replaces cowl.*)

Raymond.—Ralpho Gonsalamos!

Anselmo.— No longer so;
Though weak humanity acknowledge kin
If suddenly a face start from the Past—
Long buried with the Springs of faded years—
Father Anselmo knoweth not the man
Save this, that who so dare avouch he cast
Away the wordlings's life in sloth or fear,
Lies to his Maker! Now, fair son, I go
To complines in the chapel nigh. Wilt thou
Join in our services of praise and prayer?
Saved from the wrath of war by heavenly aid
Well may the warrior thankfully adore.

Raymond.—How sadly strange is such a place to me!
Yet, reverend father, an thou'lt on before
Soon will I follow.

Anselmo.— We shall never meet
In this vain world again. My yearly task
Of portioning Count Hugo's dole among
The brethren, for the last time is done. Ere morn,
I journey where the archangel's awful fane
Towers yonder o'er the troubled sea and guards
The unworthy kingdom, and to them who seek
Bestows that peace which passeth understanding.
The Saviour guide thee!

Exit ANSELMO.

Raymond.— Now the very ground
May tremble under foot, and mountains high,

Whose roots hold fast the entrails of this globe,
Supinely topple from their base—no sign
Of wonder such events could wring
From my impassive soul! All wonderment
Hath vanished with that man! I cannot gape
Did Satan open hell and show me here
His mysteries infernal! Vanity—
What's vanity? All things of love and joy?
Or is it not the wild imaginings
Of that disordered mind—struck hard perchance
By some dread blow of Fate, and helped to further
Unmanliness by fasting and lonely cell?
Eunonia! thou thyself canst dissipate
With cause resistless such a blasphemy,
For thou art of the world, yet hast thou given
More moments of pure bliss to my true soul
Than I can dream are found in Paradise.
Oh, that for ever I might clasp that form
And view those features! What to me
Is all beside?—a barren, bitter waste.
I who have loved no woman ere this time
Have younger grown to meet the fair occasion,
And all the chemic forces of my blood
Have backward pulsed to youth and eagerness.
Thoughts which I hardly knew or had disdained,
So blind was I, come thronging to my brain;
The springtime is renewed! my supple frame
Spurns now the lately-chilling bands of age,
And passionate feelings tingle through my heart
And make existence rapture. Eunonia!
Enchantress by Love's might, this is thy work!
Thy potent charm hath lifted me to light
From utter darkness. Now I go that so

Mine unaccustomed tongue may join anew
In worship of our Maker, blessing thee
And bearing thy dear name to Heaven in prayer.
Sweet, be thou nigh when I shall come again,
And make the morning hasten through the skies!

Exit RAYMOND.

Monks' chant swells on the ear:—
"Dona nobis pacem."

EUNONIA *opens the lattice, takes a paper from her bosom, and reads*

Eunonia.—"When swells the holy psalm I shall be by,
And if in honour thou wilt deign to meet me,
Ope thou the ladies' postern." Nothing more.
Alas! I wish that all his tender words
Were writ in this dear scroll, for then could I
In reading them a thousand thousand times,
Pass quickly through the desert of my life
And have the journey ended. O Lionel,
Lionel! without thee I am neither maid,
Nor wife, nor widow! Three poor days ago
How happy were we! Then came hell, and now—
I wish the moon were shining on my grave.
A wretch foredoomed to living death, this joy
May yet be mine—to see him once again!
And though we meet to part for aye, 'twill be
A lonely glimpse of heaven . . . The guards shall hear
No step of mine, and, ere they me resolve
Or ghost or mortal, the postern will be gained.

She closes the lattice, leaves the light burning, and descends.

Enter LIONEL *round a corner of the high wall, equipped for a journey.*

Lioncl.—Will she vouchsafe to meet me? There it burns,
That vestal flame, her taper—holy light!
Oft have I lingerd here and yearned, when storm
And rain howled through the dark, that I were made
A little bird to beat with fluttering wing
Against her lattice—then had she ta'en me in
And pitied me and warmed me on her bosom!
Will she not come again? Thou white-faced moon,
Canst thou not print oblivion on my brain
And make a dream of that which is too true?
Oh, if thou couldst! Oh, if thou couldst! My lost,
Lost love! ... Would we were standing man to man
Here in the moonlight! by my life's ruin, I swear
His soul or mine should face the dawn in Heaven!
....I have grown old since I did see her! Old?
The tottering grandsire of a hundred years
Hath younger pulses than this heavy heart
Can ever give me—withered ere my days
Have known the bloom of manhood ... Will she come
And bless me? Will she come? or am I thrust
From Paradise without one word or token
To cheer the weary way which lies before?
What if she hath not had my poor request? ...
Yet Giles affirmed 'twas rendered sure in hand ...
No shadow on the lattice ... Not a sound
Comes from her chamber to my straining ear!
No more may I behold her, that is bliss
Which but remains for some hereafter! ... Hark! ..
The postern seemed to tremble ... God! ... it moves!

EUNONIA *opens the postern door and advances toward him.*

It opens! ... Heaven be kind! ... 'tis she! 'tis she.'
Fate, I defy thee! Eunonia!

Eunonia.— Lionel!

Lionel.—Then thou hast dared—

Eunonia.— I would dare all for thee.

Lionel.—O impotence of Love, that lives like ours,
Where two hearts beat as in one breast, should be
Asunder riven! O impotence of Fate,
That love like ours, though worlds between us rolled,
Should be for ever changeless!

Eunonia.— Why hath life
Grown hideous? Have we earned the curse of God
By loving one another? I am racked,
Tormented as some wretch may be whose hands
Have worked the vilest crime—whose venomed soul
Served evil only! Is it then decreed,
This poignant horror, this dread punishment?
Is there a just Creator, if thou and I
Are robbed of all the promise of our love
And must walk separate through the pleasant ways?

Lionel.—I knew not sorrow till thy father spake
The fearful doom which banned me from my heaven;
Yet this was joy to what of anguish tore
My heart when thou wert clasped in Raymond's arms,
That strangling sight! true mercy had struck me blind!

Eunonia.—No fiend could dream of torture such as filled
My shuddering body, while his loathly touch

Crept through the swoon and dragged me back to woe.
O too brief respite! would it had been death.
Lionel.—Fain had I driven my dagger through his heart;
What stayed the blow I know not, for my soul
Was but a wasting fire of rage and terror—
Remembrance now is agony! O God,
Show Thou more kindness, or give Thou more strength!
Eunonia.—Love, what is left us?
Lionel.— Hath thy father since
That fatal morning spoke to thee of aught
Touching thyself and this Lord Raymond?
Eunonia.— No!
I have not seen my father; desolate,
I kept my chamber, and good Berthalind
To him excused me as might best avail.
Alas! he deemed an ecstasy of bliss
At sudden fortune had o'erborne my strength!
And satisfied thus easily, next morn
Went to Coutances with old Gerard.
Lionel.— His mind
Is open as the sunshine, and suffused
With such a nobleness suspicion ne'er
May gain a lodgment, else our love had been
As known to him as 'tis to old Gerard,
Who late besought me to forbear this place
While unendowed with rank and martial fame.
And I had told thy father of our love,
Prayed him the rather to regard my suit
As pleaded by De Toesni's heir, than him
Who poor, unknown, hath on his bounty fed
These many years; but mine unworthiness

Pressed on me sore and gagged my tongue, while Hope
Would whisper, "Thou shalt yet be great—away!
Thy deeds shall triumph over Time's disdain,
And generations yet to come shall hear
How well De Toesni won his lands anew—
Then mayst thou ask nor fear refusal." Thou
Wouldst wander near and Love would cry afraid,
"Wilt leave thy dear one for the barren world
Where ne'er a heart like hers may beat for thee,
Where ne'er a face like hers may bless thy sight?"
And thus I lingered wishing I were gone,
Yet so Eunonia still might be mine own.
He wins who dares; I dared not, and—I lost.

Eunonia.—What, lost? O never, Lionel! I am thine,
And only thine! Shall any hand profane
The holy love which fills our hearts and made
Life one long rapture; which will live and burn
When all the stars above us wander dark
In night eternal! May oblivion seize
My senses if I ever yield a jot!
Can fifty fathers as my Lionel be?

Lionel.—O love, thy words fall glowing on the mine
Of passion stifled here within; seek not
To spring it, or, by Heaven, the high resolves
Of royal duty will be blown to air!

Eunonia.—What canst thou mean?

Lionel.— Eunonia, when my heart
Took courage and whisper'd what thou know'st too well,
And got response of so divine a taste
That happiness ran thrilling through my blood—
Was it by look or motion shown?

Eunonia.— Thy face
Beamed on me as an angel's; how I blest
My Maker I could give such joy!
Lionel.— Such joy
Was naught to that now mine, as thus thy voice
Rendereth assurance of our lasting love!
I am not worthy this immortal gift;
Nor breathes she who could mate thy mind or beauty!
How I do love thee! Witness, Heaven and Earth,
And strike me dumb, ye everlasting powers,
If that my soul doth know a dearer bliss
Than is Eunonia! Love for thee fills all,
And makes me thine in everything I am!
Eunonia.—I tremble while I worship!
Lionel.— Yet, this night—
This night—my steed stands waiting.
Eunonia.— What say'st thou?
Lionel.—How can I speak? it tears my vitals! ... I—
I go ...
Eunonia.—Unsay those words! Thou shalt not go!
Thou shalt not go and leave me loveless here!
Lionel, thou shalt not go! thou shalt not go!
Lionel.—Eunonia!
Eunonia.— If thou goest I will go;
And if thou dost not take me as thy peer,
Afoot through all the wide world will I follow—
Thy page, thy groom, thy handmaid. Shouldst thou spurn
Thy servant, I will kiss thy feet content,
So thou art near.
Lionel.— God, she unmans me quite!
Mine own, if then we met a poor old man

With snowy beard and sorrow-wrinkled brow,
Who cried, "My child! what hast thou done with her,
Thou traitor to the ties of home and honour!"
Could I look back into his eyes and say
"I am no traitor! Well have I repaid
Thy constant kindness and thy manly love.
I have not wrecked thy life nor stol'n the gem
Which decked the bleak remainder of thy days;
But sacred held betrothal to thy friend,
And left her in thine arms; not knave enough
To make her love excuse for villainy."?

Eunonia.—Alas! thou art too honest, or my heart
Hath fatally misjudged thy love of me.
I drift before the storm; hast thou no help?
No comfort but the pitiless crown of thorns?
I can not wear that crown; life is not life
Apart from thee.

Lionel. Eunonia, do not doubt me!
Naught left but honour, if thou dost refuse
To grant me this, then am I poor indeed.

Eunonia.—Forgive me, love! despair had made me mad.

Lionel.—Curst be the fortune that so tortures thee!
If we had never met it would be well;
But having met, and loved, and lost the right
To make that love our own—we may lose love,
Though that shall leave us bleeding, broken hearts;
Yet never lose the spring of noble minds—
Bright honour.

Eunonia.— Thou art pleading Raymond's cause.

Lionel.—Canst thou remember, when a little lad,
I first beheld thy face?

Eunonia.— Could I forget?

Lionel.—Who freely found for me the sanctuary
Which Nature makes the service of a parent?
Whose hand hath held me up? Whose kindly arms
Have folded to his breast? Whose generous gifts
Have made a plenty of my barrenness,
And broke the sting of poverty? Whose care
Gave youthful cravings their desire, till e'en
The hallowed memory of my loss grew dim? ...
Three days ago I had not named his name
Without the glow of shame upon my cheek,
For then, in bitter wrath, I swore to fly—
If thou wouldst go—with thee from him and Raymond!
Now can I answer—Hugo, Count St. Maur!
Me, ingrate, with effaceness wrong requite him?
Eunonia.—My blood is frozen, Lionel; to discern
The path I yearn to tread is doubly barred—
Lionel.—By Honour and by Duty. If I loved thee
Ignobly, selfishly, unholily,
How easy 'twere to find in Love a king
Whose lightest inclination had been law;
In basest perfidy a righteous deed;
And lure affection, so the gentle bond
Which binds a maiden to her sire were snapt!
Eunonia.—I have learnt the cruel lesson. What is left
For us, my Lionel? what is left?
Lionel.— To part—
To part—for ever.
Eunonia.— Not to part! no, no!
Lionel.—My darling, do not rob me of the frail
Resolve which strives against my weakness.
A horn is sounded.
Hark!

The warder's horn! Thy father and Gerard
Back from Coutances. I dare not keep thee here.
here.
I have left a letter for my lord; tell him
I can no longer rust in these old walls,
I must be gone.

Eunonia.— O Lionel! I will kneel
Before Lord Raymond and confess our love
And pray his mercy; if he have a heart
He shall restore us each to each.

Lionel.— And break
Thy father's knightly word? Forswear the oath
Which thou though innocent didst take, and bring
Black desolation on the waning years
Of him, my benefactor?

Eunonia.— O loyal soul
That with unfaltering hand doth point the way!
Now, out of my great love I say to thee,
Go! and the smile of God be thy reward!
Our love, sublimed above the love of earth,
Is merged in victory of self, and thou
Art he the hero martyr.

Lionel.— Fare thee well!
My loved, my lost one, fare thee well! I bless
The Christ that I have followed Him in this,
And most that thou has doubted not my love
Undying as His own. Farewell! may He,
Thy lowly Saviour, comfort thee! If, love,
By yielding life I could remove one pang
Which racks thy heart, how gladly were it given.

They move back to the postern.

Eunonia! when in years to come thy lord

Hath made thee happy, and the children's feet
Go pattering by, and all is well with thee,
Deign through the misty shadows of the Past
To glance a moment; should a tear betray
The memory of this hour, thou mayst without
A blush give answer, "Child, I thought of one
Who loved me better than his happiness."

Eunonia.—Lionel, thou break'st my heart!

She falls upon his breast. They stand thus in a close embrace.

Enter RAYMOND.

Raymond.— A boy again,
I knelt before the altar of our Lord,
The Maker of this firmament of fire.
Old habits long lain by, yet once renewed,
Bring near the days when they unquestioned reigned.
My mother seemed beside me, and no doubt
Arose to chill devotion.

Eunonia.— I never loved
As I do now.

Raymond Voices?

Eunonia.— A thousandfold,
Through bitter parting, grows my love.

The moonlight suffusing Lionel and Eunonia discovers them clearly to Raymond.

Lionel.— Farewell.

Raymond.—Heavenly hosts! what see I? Eunonia held
In Lionel's arms—lip pressed to lip! O burst
Ye eyeballs that reveal such ravening shame!
Blood! only blood can cleanse the foul disgrace!
Yet stay, good sword—a soldier I—no murder!
He dies—but in fair fight!

Lionel.— A last farewell.
God keep thee darling! darling!
Eunonia.— Oh, farewell!
Still mine, still mine.

Exit EUNONIA *through the postern.*

Lionel.— Now have I known the worst!
Come spiteful fortune—evil—danger—death;
Ye are to me but petty, insensate things!
How vain your cruellest agonies to this
Dark sacrament of love.
Raymond.—(*concealing his face in cloak*)—Stand, sir, and draw!
Lionel.—Who art thou? (*draws his sword*)
Raymond.— Ask me not, but press thy blade
To mine! Dost hesitate? Draw! or by Him
Who made us both, I slay thee weaponless!
Lionel.—Under her window! No. Sir, rest assured
I am not seeking to avoid thee; pass
With me along the wall where unobserved
The business may be ended. This way: so.

They go higher up the stage along the wall. Eunonia, much distressed, opens and appears at the lattice.

Eunonia.—Oh Lionel! Lionel! It is too hard! too hard!
Too hard!

She closes the lattice and withdraws, sobbing.

Lionel.— Now, sir, be ready!

Lionel draws his sword. He and Raymond face each other on guard.

Yet, withal,

I crave the reason for this wild attack—
What is thy name and rank? I know thee not.

Raymond.—Then drag them from me, an thou canst! No more!
Presumptuous boy, dost doubt I am thy peer?

Lionel.—Nay, but in courtesy—

Raymond.— Thou art no knight!
Thou art a churl!

Lionel.— Have at thee, then!

They fight. In the eagerness of bitter combat they move down again, nearer front of stage.

Raymond.— God's love!
No churl—an iron wrist!

Lionel.— An arm of steel!

Lionel is wounded and falls. Raymond stoops over him. The cloak unwraps and shows his face.

Lionel.—Raymond? Oh, misery! Strike again, and heal me!

Sinks back insensible.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Room in Count Hugo's Castle.*

GERARD.

Gerard.—An honest mystery offers to the mind
Much good in seeking due unravelment;
But this with which my brain now aches must be
A most dishonest, deep, unsolvable,
Unwholesome mystery as e'er threw spell
Of glamour o'er a troubled soul. No thought,
No will, no habit, cogitation, search,

Exploit, adventure, purpose, or attempt
Makes plain the dim profundity, or tells
How this sharp sickness of young Sir Lionel
Began, nor what hath caused so dire effect.
I grope, a blind man in a ditch, and, worse
Than usual blindness, trip myself heels up,
And plump into the mud with every move.
Let me recall the weight of circumstance
Which fashioned such a casket, yet witheld
The key. That night my lord and I returned
Late from Coutances, Lord Raymond bursts within
My chamber just as I was well-composed
To sleep, the heritage of all just men;
He in a worry of distress entreats
My services to find a leech, and hale
The man of physic to his lodging quick
As time may meet the need, and caps the freak
By forcing on me half-awake an oath
Most dread that never to a living soul
The business shall be told. As hap would have,
My lord and I nigh home had fallen in
With old Bontaine, the town chirurgeon, who
That instant snugly snored within the castle.
I led Lord Raymond to him, and they passed
Away before mine eyes, and left me mazed
And doubtful whether 'twas a dream or no.
Faith! many a dream hath far more life-like been—
Yet that was never dream, but staring fact,
And act, and motion. When I ask Bontaine,
"How doth the patient?" he but shaketh head,
While I may not go nigh my dear young master
Though 'twas ten days ago, and the good Count
Laments his friend hath need of surgery,

And vows 'tis but old-fashioned modishness
For further dallying with his marriage-day.
Strange how he missed not Lionel! My poor lad,
I will endeavour to behold thee! Mine
The duty thou canst claim beyond all else.

Enter HUGO *with a letter in his hand.*

Hugo.—Gerard, a knave hath lately given me this.
Indeed, 'twas a good sennight since, methinks.
I thrust it in my doublet at the time
And straight forgot it; take thou it and read.

Gerard.—(*reads*)—"To my loving and honoured Count Hugo de St. Maur. My honoured lord,—When thou hast beheld these lines I shall be gone, endeavouring, since the times have grown so unwarlike, to atone in far countries for my present and past most miserable negligence, in serving mine own ease rather than the duty which lieth before every man. That this may be done the more readily, I have but taken one lackey, Giles Daubeny, with me, and refrained from those courteous and loving adieus to thee and thine, which thou hast all right to expect. In this, indeed, pray pardon me, and deign to receive the fullest acknowledgments my poor heart can give of all thy great and manifold kindness unto me. Give for me my blessing unto Gerard, mine old nurse and counsellor, who was ever with thee in this matter. That heaven may make me worthier thy love, and repay thee therefor is my constant prayer.

Lionel De Toesni."

Hugo.—In sooth, well writ and manly; he is mine
Own son by all the lasting ties which bind

Son to a father. Know thou this, Gerard,
I have a fixed assurance that the boy
Will win his name the old renown again.

Gerard.—God grant it. Oh, 'twas a broken heart breathed through
This letter!

Hugo.— Thus our counsel ta'en at last,
We yet shall all behold him honoured, rich,
And envied by the great; and though so long
He hath delayed, yet mightier fame shall make
Ample amends for past obscurity.

Gerard.—Mayst thou be proved a prophet, dear my lord!
I lack thy cheerful prescience—if my life's
Best blood could give desire achievement, it
Were rained this moment at thy feet.

Hugo.— Gerard,
In seeing thy devotion to his weal,
I faintly prize the treasure found by me
In thee, my faithful seneschal. Be sure
'Twill be as I have pictured, and with years
Let faith in this grow sturdier, and defy
The sure progression of decaying age.

Gerard.—My lord, thy favour lendeth present boldness—
Let me retain his letter; 'tis a thing,
Perhaps the only thing, will speak of him
For many a day to these old eyes.

Hugo.— 'Tis thine.

Enter BONTAINE.

How now, physician! hast a good account
Of our Lord Raymond? Doth he take the air?

Bontaine.—His worship fareth well, yet for some days
Will rest in his apartment, and doth crave,

My lord, thy pardon for the seeming slight
In asking, as before, that he be left
Unvisited by any in the house.
He trusteth thy affection will discern
Herein no slur on hospitality.

Hugo.—Dear Raymond! be recovery served therein,
Could tenfold caution parley with affront?
Bontaine, is it not most notable that he
So younger far than I should feel the claw
Of withering Time—as thus meseemeth—while
Untouched, but rarely, still my step is firm,
My brain is clear, my frame no ailment weakens?

Gerard.—(*aside*)—How doth a morning-posset thaw the frost!

Bontaine.—A man is simply what he makes himself.
Great Nature heeds his work and bears result
Accordingly. Thus they whose primal heat
Hath dint to overcome where weaker flesh
Sink 'neath the weight and stumble, may withal
So turn from temperate action that when years
Grow many, like strong castles undermined,
They topple piteous ruins. Whereas they
Whose sinews are as threads, whose very strength
Is weakness manifest, by wiser care
Maintain such due proportion of their powers
That Age is only Youth grown old. They know
True health who, having natural strength, yet build
Thereto as jealous husbandmen, nor are
Forever prodigal.

Hugo.— My case, Bontaine;
What might my youth had gained my manhood kept.
Why, when I left the field this good right hand

Was vigorous as the day when first it grasped
A lance, and is yet so. Nay, I will test
The truth thereof! Gerard, go fetch my lance
Which standeth in the pictured gallery,
And ye shall see what pith mine arms retain.

Gerard.—That trëen staff? that weaver's beam? Why, zounds!
The great archangel need be nigh to stay
Thy body perpendicular!

Hugo.— Away!—
Wouldst measure by thyself a man like me?
Go fetch it, sirrah!

Gerard.—(*aside*). An he wield that lance
With back unbroken, Time doth me grievous wrong!

Exit GERARD.

Hugo.—Thou seest what a stubborn knave that same
White-bearded seneschal can be! 'Tis trash,
Long while he deemeth me a grandfather,
Disabled and unfit for use. Gadzooks!
But I will show him what a knight may do
Though threescore years have tumbled on his back!

Bontaine.—(*aside*)—As thou wilt tumble on thine own!
(*To* HUGO) My lord,
Some men grope through the daylight as 'twere dark;
They see their fancies only—custom blinds
Perception as to real attributes
Of others; if these answer not the shape
Forced on distorted vision, straight transformed
To fit the die—beauty is ugliness,
Youth middle-age, ambition self-conceit,
Virtue pollution, courage cowardice,

Hugo.—'Fore God thou hast a proper apprehension!
How blind Gerard doth grow. Ha, here he cometh!

Enter GERARD, *dragging the lance behind him.*

Now for the trial.
Gerard.— Have a care, my lord!
I do protest 'tis tempting Providence
For thee to raise so weighty a spar. It fell
When first unfastened, nearly cracking this
My thick but only brainpan.
Hugo.— Give it here.
Gerard.—Help thou, Bontaine, 'tis only fit to mast
Some stout boat on the ocean.
Hugo.— Ha, the bur
Is loose.
Gerard.— Up, Bontaine!
Bontaine.— Saints! 'tis no lady's pin!

They raise it and keep it in position.

Hugo.—So! to me—now—on rest—again I see
Stout fellows falling 'neath my stroke! Leave hold,
Ye twain while I will run a glorious charge.

They leave hold. The point of the lance descends. Hugo, clutching desperately, is dragged down, the lance falling on the floor.

Gerard.—Heaven grant he be not hurt!
Bontaine.— A dangerous game!
Hugo.—Wilt thou not help me to arise, thou knave!
Dar'st laugh because I stumbled? 'twas the bur—
The bur, I tell thee; let me to't again.
Gerard.—Nay, that thou shalt not.
Hugo.— Sooth, I sweat a deal—

Ye see how 'twas—I grasping thus on rest,
My fingers by the loosened bur were spread
And lost their proper grip. *Coughing.*

Bontaine.— No man may hold
A loose-burred lance, though many try to do it.

Gerard.—My lord, thou art a-tremble!

Hugo.— Tush! 'tis naught.

Gerard.—The fall hath shaken thee.

Hugo.— May I not fall
If it should please me? May I not use my limbs?

Gerard.—I do beseech thee, dear my lord, to lean
On this my faithful arm.

Bontaine.— Indeed, my lord,
They who disdain support may come to harm;
Mayhap thou hast strained thy pericardium.

Hugo.—Am I a woman? hath not my good right hand
Sufficient strength to grasp a thousand such!
I need support? I can support ye both!
It was the bur, I tell ye, and the fall
Is naught!

Gerard.— I should not relish such a fall.

Bontaine.—Some falls are hurtful—some may well be held
As harmless.

Hugo.—(*aside*)—An Saint Michael himself had said
That this could ever be, I had told him he lied!
'S death! quite winded! they shall not know!
(*to Bontaine*) Bontaine,
My love and duty to Lord Raymond; give
Him token of my constant prayers that he
May from the insidious foe be quickly freed.
Some weighty business calls me hence; I leave
Ye two old cacklers out of my mishap
To hatch what eggs ye may.

Gerard.— Nay, I protest,
My service shall not blab.
Bontaine.— Here am I dumb.
Gerard.—Farewell, my lord.
Bontaine.— God keep thee, noble Count.
Exit Hugo.
Gerard.—Now, Sir Physician, give thy tongue a use,
And ease my longing heart; how doth my dear
Sir Lionel? is this mystic sickness eased?
Hath he recovered? is he nigh to death?
What! still oracular? I will endure
No longer.
Bontaine.— I have told thee thrice before,
Lord Raymond hath by oath most terrible
Chained every motion of an answering tongue.
Gerard.—Oaths! what are oaths in such a case as this?
My lord believes him far afield endowed
With all that lusty youth may claim; while I—
A traitor to my lord whose bread I eat—
His honest, simple soul, scarce could suspect
A foe of treachery—I and thou both know
Sir Lionel smitten mysteriously lieth here
Held in the clutch of Raymond. That bold man,
May be for purposes most devilish, keeps
But fellowship with my poor lad, and shuns
The open day of heaven which will not hide
Dark deeds and guilty projects. I have sworn
An oath as good as any gentleman's,
But now, methinks, 'twere better broken than kept.
Bontaine.—Some men are callous to a brother's woe,
While some themselves do feel a stranger's pang;
Thy pleading eyes nigh bid me disregard
My vow to Raymond.

Gerard.— Surely without fear
Of man or friar thou mayst assuage my thirst
With some scant knowledge.

Bontaine.— I will tell thee this,
That one we wot of is so tossed upon
A tempest of delirium, though near healed
In body, whether yet the mind will e'er
Return to calmer reason, He alone
Who made that mind may know.

Gerard.— Be merciful!

Bontaine.—Thy thoughts of Raymond are unworthy thee!
A patient nurse he sits beside the bed;
Come night, come morning, thou wouldst find him there.
A mother's hand ne'er dealt with tenderer touch,
A father's love was never richlier kind.
Rest assured that young De Toesni's weal
Is in such keeping safer than in thine.

Gerard.—Right glad am I to hear thee; thy rebuke
Is welcome music, good Bontaine.

Bontaine.— Some men
Pass cleanly through a sickness nor contract
More dangerous ills, while others clear the storm
But to be shattered on a rock-bound coast.

Gerard.—Lord Raymond leaves him not thou sayest?

Bontaine.— Save when
The night hath fallen, for a little space
Wherein to breathe the air.

Gerard.— Heaven bless him for it!

Bontaine.—Gerard, time fleeteth; to such a perilous pinch
Hath this misfortune grown, no remedy
Remains for skill chirurgical. Beyond
My art or knowledge there are powers which move

The weakened nerves of memory. If our hope
Belie us not, he may be still assured
To manhood sound in body and mind.

Gerard.— I grasp
No meaning in thy speech.

Bontaine.— Then quickly guide
Where Lady Eunonia may in private hear
The message which I bear, for she is now
The pivot whereon our expectations turn;
And while we seek her thou shalt comprehend
The meaning of my words.

Gerard.— Then follow me.

Exeunt.

SCENE II.—*Interior of Raymond's apartment in Count Hugo's castle.* LIONEL *lying on a couch; disordered dress, emaciated, and having the appearance of an invalid.* RAYMOND *watching over him; much altered; haggard and worn. Lamps burning. Heavy arras across the back of scene.*

Raymond.—Quiet at last, poor lad; the leech doth well
To use Gerard as messenger, or she
Had known his features, and my desperate plan
Failed consummation. Can I gauge their love?
Is there a need? Wild hopes and folly strain
My mind to such an action, while within
I feel and own the worst, yet strive to change it.
Mad? who so mad as I? for I would seek
To find uncertainty in certitude,
And shake the stars a-jingle in mine hand!

Lionel.—Shine on! forsooth, my lady loves thy light—
Not on a Thursday—look you, it were vile
To bind the dripping rainbow with a string!

Yet to distil sweet nectar from the moon
For sharpening sword-blades were a gallant task.
Raymond.—Hush! thou wilt wake thy lady!
Lionel.— Seest thou not
That grisly form which steals athwart the glade?
Ha! he will rend me from my love! help! help!
Raymond.—Fear not! so—I have slain thine enemy.
Lionel.—What, think you, will he come again?
Raymond.— But now
I passed my rapier through his corse—no, no;
He may not more withstand thee.
Lionel.— I am content. *He rests.*
Raymond.—Out of his mutterings oftentimes evolve
Ideas in seeming sequence, yet withal
Whene'er I try to gather up the threads
'Tis but a tangle.
Lionel.— On the higher bough!
Raymond.—What had been best—a living death in life,
Or sudden end to being? If I may judge,
Our life is not so precious that to strip
A soul of earthly garments, howsoe'er
Unlawful, deals that soul most ill; but this—
This shattered reason, this unknowing mind,
This flawed machine a touch would make divine,
This entitled non-entity, this ruin
Of Nature's perfect work—he who brings this
Hath cheated life and death alike.
Lionel.— Her rose!
Eunonia's rose! ha! wouldst thou pluck it from me?
Raymond.—That name! that name!
Lionel.— Why doth it wither now?
Raymond.—Art sure it withers?

Lionel.— An the sheen
Were bright as then, could I not climb thereon
And get me into heaven? No, no! he comes—
That dreadful form!
Raymond.— There, see, he lieth slain.
Lionel.—Yea; but the moonlight scorcheth out mine eyes!
Yet bury me where the oak-tree wooed that rose,
So I may sail on every wind to her.
By the archangel, I will go with Giles!
See to't! have ready hog-backed Joan for me!
Some fairy-queen hath o'er the petals blusht!
No, no, Bernardo—'twas a thrust in tierce.
Wilt thou not save me from the fiend?
Raymond.— Take firm
Assurance that the fiend is dead! That rose,
Which with incessant plaint he grieves mine ear,
What may it be? Was it some perished token?
Lionel.—In sooth, dear lord, I am too poor methinks
For such a high estate. Nay, said I not
That if 'twere trampled on 'twould live the same?
But yesterday it held the morning dew.
Raymond.—Come, rest thee on thy couch, thou art aweary.
Lionel.—What? when the trumpet sounds a charge? the word
Thou hast, so keep good watch, brave sentinel!
Raymond.—I will keep watch while thou dost slumber.
Lionel.— Yea?
But lightly tread else thou wilt crush the rose.
Raymond.—Again that rose!
Lionel.— Hear'st thou?
Raymond.— Nay, fear me not!
Lionel.—Then if he come there is no quarter?

Raymond.— None.
I am prepared, so thou wilt take thy rest.
Lionel.—To-morrow we may meet.
Sinks back and rests.
Raymond.— Peace, wandering soul!
Peace, not as the world giveth, be given to thee.
He rests again. His father was my friend
Till the sad times arose; and I have thus
Requited friendship—as a demon might!
By Heaven, a noble lad! De Toesni's own.
In every limb the old heroic strain!
I have not dared to face the honest day
Since that curst hour. Is every atom crammed
With palpitating life? each tiny grain
A world built up of myriad organisms?
And that we reckon solid rock or tree
Formed in their very essence of living things,
Whose multitudinous frames invisible are
Through infinite minuteness? Is the air
Which wraps my body here and melts away
To space ethereal, wombing universe
On universe, and filling height and depth
And unimaginable immensity,
An instrument so delicately wrought
Harmonious, penetrating, sensitive,
That through its tell-tale vastness is conveyed
Each thought, desire, emotion, passion, act
Conceived, begot, felt, borne, or done by man?
This all must be, and Cain and I have known
Creation watching with her myriad eyes,
As only wretches know who stoop to evil!
Strange aspects crown the solemn arch of heaven,
Mysterious whispers load the trembling wind,

Familiar tokens of the smiling world
Drip blood, a dreadful Presence ever by
Insistent asks, "Where, murderer, is thy brother?"
God! hath Eunonia my offence divined?
For having traced my customary way
Unto her lattice yestereve, when she
Most unaware did ope the bars and leaned
Toward the glowing vesper-star and sighed,
Though hid in gloom I dared not meet her eyes'
Reproachful glory; and when I turned,
Feeling her gaze withdrawn, as if my glance
Shot venom in't and pricked her gentle heart,
She shuddered, went, and night was desolate!
What subtile intuitions guided then
Her dreaming mind? Did the same influences
So wrench the infuriate purpose of my blood
That by these guilty arms was Lionel snatched
From the dread doom their cruel might had won?
Unkindly ministers, why held ye not
My senses dulled in bondage, when with fond
Paternal ignorance did Hugo draw
My war-drows'd vision to Eunonia—claim
The due fulfilment of a light-lipt oath,
Ta'en but to lull a friend's anxieties
For what might hap hereafter? Heavenly grace!
My brain is swimming in a sea of fire
As point by point each circumstance unrolls
Before unread, unseen, unapprehended!
Their love! Oh, Raymond, thou art school'd indeed,
That thus with voluble tongue thou durst express
What seemed impossibly monstrous—undesigned
By all coincidence of natural things!

Fool! was she not nigh him every day? Could he
Do aught but love her? though, by the breath of God,
I swear his love to mine is as the frail
Cry of a child to manhood's lusty shout,
As a meteor's vanishing trail to noon's
Full splendour, as the starved imaginings
Of what may-be to those eternal deeds
Which crown the fruited promise of what Is!
He love as I? Were he a thousand-souled,
My love would still outreach his added powers
And live diviner on that height where Self
Is blent and lost in others.

Lionel moves uneasily and struggles.

Lionel.— Thou hast lied!
Thou art the Evil One—the deadly Fiend:
I know thee Satan!

Raymond.— Knowest thou, poor boy,
That thou art he who barrest out my heaven?
Tush! I speak folly to a madman.

Lionel.— Wretch!
I know thee by the strangeness of thy face
And brutal speech wherein thou gabblest—
Avaunt! I will be gay though she be gone!
Alas, alas! they tore me from my love!

Raymond.—O God, may I hear this and live? For he
Distraught, enfeebled, lying there forlorn
Is happier so beloved than I who own
All that men count the chiefest joys of life!

Lionel.—Damnation to thy soul! thy shadow fell
Between the sun and me, and dasht the dark
About my happy fortune.

Raymond.— Happy fortune!
Such words are sadly consonant with the past.
Can he be mending? Woe to the lover then
Yet to the evil-doer salvation!
Lioncl.— Wretch!
Wilt thou begone? She shall be never bound
In the deep pits where thou dost reign!
Raymond.— No more—
He is thy friend who watcheth, yea, thy friend.
Lioncl.—Art thou not lord of that infernal throng
Who crowd around and jeer and thrust their nails
Far in the yielding marrow of my brain?
Look! they feed on't!
Raymond.— 'S death! he is mad indeed.
Lioncl.—Quit sight or I will slay thee! Leave the world!
Resume thy sway where furies gird the house!
Begone!
Raymond.—Nay, be appeased, I am thy friend.
Lioncl.—Dost tarry, vulture? I will cut thy heart
Out the black pouch wherein it flouts at God!

Rises, and seizing RAYMOND, *struggles violently with him, endeavouring to snatch the dagger out of his belt.*

Raymond.—Have mercy, Jesu! he will tear his wound
Agape!
Lioncl.— Give way, devil! give way, Beelzebub!
Raymond.—No, no; thou hast it not!
Lioncl.— By Heaven, I will!
Raymond.—A three-fold strength possesseth him!
Lionel.— Back, fiend!
Raymond.—This runs to danger! thou wilt rend apart

The leech's bandage—Ho! Bontaine! Bontaine!
The potion—quick!

Lionel.— He shall not help thee!

Raymond.— Hold!
Back to thy couch—Bontaine! why comes he not?
Quick! bring the potion for this madman! quick,
Bontaine!

Lionel.— Beast! art thou victor?

Sinking back exhausted.

Enter BONTAINE, *phial in hand.*

Raymond.— Victor? so—
Be comforted and rest. (*To Bontaine*) Administer
The soothing potion: he is much inflamed
By burning fantasies—with passionate strength
Hath struggled in my grasp, and barely missed
To stab me with this dagger.

Bontaine.— Hold his hands,
An't please you, my good lord, then I may do't.

Administers the draught.

'Tis a most potent medicine—'twill enforce
A quiet flowing on unruly blood,
And all the finer sensibilities
Thus be prepared to feel the lightest touch
Which may awaken memory and resume
Dominion o'er the mind. See, he is eased.

Raymond.—Thou art assured, physician, of this thing?

Bontaine.—My lord, you gave the clew.

Raymond.— Oh, ay, 'twas that—
Thou, too, hast known

Bontaine.— Their love, my lord?

Raymond.— Their love.

Bontaine.—Why all the gossips hereabout have wagged
Impetuous tongues, and shaken heads, and nudged
Each other as these two would pass them by—
So saith Gerard. Some people do observe
Youth's fond vagaries; I myself did ne'er
Behold my lady and Sir Lionel here
In such like fellowship.

Raymond.— No?

Bontaine.— No, my lord.

Raymond.—(*aside*)—That "no" streams honied poison through my veins—
Or was he blind as Hugo?

Bontaine.— But, my lord,
Time speedeth; will it please you go within
The chamber next—there have I placed the robes
Which mock this poor attire.

Raymond.— True. Thou hast ne'er
Viewed them as lovers? Spare the answer—take
Sure watch while I am gone.

Exit RAYMOND.

Bontaine.— Fear not, my lord.
They will be present ere he can return,
For, by the horologe, the appointed hour
Is nearer than my count. A man indeed!
His is no fallen nature. An it be
Attempered to the tune of human ill,
Good ever showeth front and vanquisheth
The evil far more easily obeyed.
If I may read the signs aright, this lad
Hath fitter fields of action in the heavens,
For, on our harder earth, who needeth him?
Lord Raymond, old Sir Hugo, or myself?

Lady Eunonia surely hath not poised
Her fate on such a moon-bred gillyflower—
Though women use less reason than my nag,
Who ne'er mistaketh emptiness for corn.
More is than seems—Lord Raymond babbleth not,
And why he saved the youngling from a death
So happily contrived; why thrust on me
A dreadful oath of secrecy; and why
His days are spent a-nursing—these are "whys"
Whereunto I find no "because." In sooth,
I am become a mystery to myself,
Knowing too much, yet knowing not much more.
Can there be virtue in the coming trial?
Was the scheme mine? or hath it, cuckoo-like,
Been hatched within the nest Lord Raymond's hints
Sufficed to build? The morn may bring reply,
To-day is dumb.

Gerard.—(*within*) Dear lady, 'tis the chamber.

Bontaine.—Here? and my lord returned not?

Eunonia.—(*within*)- Stay, Gerard—
Delay a moment—I am faint—'tis naught.
O Jesu! guide me now!

Enter EUNONIA *and* GERARD. BONTAINE *partly conceals his face.*

Gerard.— Bontaine, my lady
Thus to my wild entreaties doth respond.

Eunonia.—Is the tale true? a matter of life or death?
Where is Sir Lionel? quick! deny me not!

Bontaine.—(*discovering Lionel*)—Most noble lady, this is he.

Gerard.— He lives!
My poor young master! Heaven be praised!

Bontaine.—
His mind
Wavers a wind-blown flame which finds no hold;
To all my art immedicable.
Eunonia.—
Lionel!
Bontaine.—The draught hath gained a respite—slender boon,
Yet utmost issue of my deepest knowledge.
A touch, a tone, a look, the smell of flowers,
The vision of a face—I know not what—
May lead perchance his wandering spirit back.
Here skill is useless! In the lonely hope
That one, his playfellow, might possess such fine
Affinity of soul as would unlock
The prisoned spark of reason, have we dared
Entreat thy presence, lady.
Gerard.—
Heaven give aid.
Bontaine.—(*to Gerard*)—See how she broodeth o'er him, as a bird
Whose mate is lost regards the empty nest.
Watch—if my lord delay—lest sudden fit
Of violence threaten peril. I must go.
Exit BONTAINE.
Eunonia.—Gerard, he knows me not! what doth it mean?
Gerard.—His eyes are closed, my lady.
Eunonia.—
But before,
Had I thus bended o'er him as he slumbered
He would have smiled and wakened.
Gerard.—
'Tis no sleep,
But Nature drugged to feign.
Eunonia.—
Oh, is it he?
Do not my senses cheat me? Did we part
To meet in such a fashion? Speak, Gerard;
Say all is false—that I am stumbling through

A land of dreams and this most woful sight
Is but one dream the more!

Gerard.— Would God it were!

Eunonia.—How came it so? what was the cause? who dealt
The blow? and in my kindly father's house!
Shame on the deed! may joy forsake the doer!

Enter RAYMOND, *disguised to represent* BONTAINE.

Gerard.—Hush, madam, my old heart is sore. I pray
You now for his bruis'd sake there, quench these vain
Demandings.

Eunonia.— Vain? but I will know, Gerard!

Raymond.—(*aside*)—All beauty in one face! I cannot yield her!

Gerard.—And wherefore, my sweet mistress? here hath worked
A deed whose consequence alone thou seest—
Save greater depth of mystery, of the cause
Thou art informed as I.

Raymond.—(*aside*)— My heart-strings crack!
See how she bows above him! happy Lionel!

Eunonia.—Canst thou do naught, physician, for this man?

Raymond.—Naught, lady! naught!

Eunonia.— Oh, brand him, Heaven, a slave!
A creeping slave—a paltry hypocrite
Whose bread is gained by false pretence of healing!
What use thy science and the dusty lore
Which thou hast gathered, as a cur drags mire,
Throughout thy loathsome life? Am I too harsh?
Then be thou deaf—my words shall scorch thee else!

Raymond.—(*aside*)—Deaf to her voice? Oh, what were
Raymond then!

Eunonia.—He who lies there, beyond all hope of cure,
Is he who gave a glory to my life,
Which like some rose-hued sunset never may
Be seen again. Can I be callous now?
Or view unmoved the dear one whom I love
Strained in the wild embrace of madness?

Raymond.— Hold!
In mercy hold. I have grown faint with watching!

Eunonia.—Through the dread winter of my coming years
A cruel Fate yet left one solace, this—
Though bound to that grim soldier whom I hate,
I could have loosed the chain in spirit and turned
And followed Lionel through the world, and gleaned
Haply some whisper how his fame grew bright
And noble as himself—forgetting thus
The wretched woman once a joyous maid.
Thou hast denied me. Oh, be not afeard!
I have no power to blast thee as I would.

Raymond.—(*aside*)—My God, this torture is intolerable!

Gerard.—Remember, dear my lady, that the leech
Saith by some touch or token thou mightst tune
This living discord to a perfect tone.

Eunonia.—I did not hear.

Gerard.— Is it not so, Bontaine?

Raymond.—In very truth.

Eunonia.— Physician, on my soul,
Thy skill, thy knowledge, thy experience
Are vile impostures, base, unable things—
Useless and best forgotten!

Raymond.— Lady—I—

Eunonia.—What, darest thou answer? Look on him and boast!
A wrecked, a ruined life! O Jesu! see
The sunken cheek, the pallid brow, the hand
Clammy as death! All health, all manhood canker'd!
Tears fill thine eyes, Gerard, and I have none!
Thou lovest him, old friend, yet were thy love
Sublimed and multiplied to heavenly proof,
Still never couldst thou love him as I love!
Yea, though Lord Raymond hold me as his wife,
My love with Lionel will live buried.
Raymond.— Ah!
Eunonia.—Despite our love we parted, that the pledge
My father gave might honourably be kept;
And we did never think to meet again,
But go our separate ways and work our work,
God help us! as we might—and this is all!
Raymond.—(*aside*)—Pity me Heaven! her words are whips of stings!

Lionel moves uneasily.

Gerard.—He moves, my lady, look you! be prepared.
Raymond.—(*aside*)—Oh, she would drag my soul from Satan's grip!
He will recover.
Gerard.—(*to Raymond*)— Be controlled, my lord.
Eunonia.—Lionel! Lionel! Lionel! my only love!
Raymond.—My God! that cry would wake the dead!
Lionel.—(*rising suddenly*)— She calls!
I hear her voice!

Sinks back exhausted.

Eunonia.— He spoke! he knew me not!
Gerard.—He knew thy voice; he looked not on thee then.
Eunonia.—How frail and weary! Now be brave!—
Lionel!
Raymond.—Would I were he.
Eunonia.— Lionel! my love, arise!
And be mine own once more. Christ pardon me!
Lionel.—(*regarding her and gradually recognising her*).
Where art thou calling through the mist? I hear!
And feel the light is breaking overhead.
I hear, and beat them off, and struggle on
To thee, to thee! Oh, kiss me as of old!
Eunonia.—Love, I am nigh! Love, I am bending o'er
thee now!
Thus with a kiss I draw thee from the dark!
Come back to earth, to life, to me!
Lionel.— Eunonia!
Eunonia.—Mine own!
Raymond.— He is saved!
Gerard.—(*kneeling*)— Almighty Father, Thou
Hast heard my prayer.
Lionel.— Love, thou hast lifted me
From hell to heaven!
Raymond.— And I have fallen from heaven
To hell!

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Room in Count Hugo's Castle.*

DROGO.

Drogo.—Faith, I have lost the tally of events here by captaining the men-at-arms back to Ver, and am therefore somewhat in the dark. Thereon I but obeyed

my lord's commands, while he crost country to greet his old comrade, Count Hugo, after so long an absence, with expressed intention to rejoin us quickly. Then came the puzzle—for when I did expect to see him, a messenger appeareth, bearing his strait summons that, bringing the notary, the castle-keys, and certain parchments, I should betake myself with all speed to this camp of the feminine enemy. On arrival, my lord's greeting was after the same old kindly fashion; but to the notary he hath been as a twin-brother, and suffereth him rarely out of his sight; I being left at the mercy of these Jezebels until now, when he biddeth me have ready his charger secretly bestowed and afterward gain the Lady Eunonia to meet him presently in the pictured gallery. All this, moreover, in a mysterious and hesitating fashion, which accordeth not with his former heartiness of speech, and violently moved as I knew by his tell-tale eyes. Did he want me for this? Why hath he been so constantly closeted with the notary? For marriage settlements, and thereby the detestable undoing of his fortune. My lord is noble, generous, brave, wise, and kind! a gentleman of whom the Almighty may be proud; why then should he do so foolishly? Nay, nay, it cannot be! Yet why see her in the pictured gallery? For an open answer to the riddle I will wait in a private spot whereby he must pass in going thither, and humbly crave some knowledge of his purposes. He may refuse; but I will follow him, while one foot can swing before the other, to the uttermost ends of the earth. His charger stands ready—ay, and so likewise is mine own old piece of tough horseflesh. Whither the

Lord Raymond shall venture, thither may Drogo. He saved my life when the Spaniard's blade was at my throat, but to so large a heart that maketh no obligation, and is a bare service which, he sayeth, my poor doings have long since overpaid. A kingly mind that holds heroic deeds a simple duty! Shall I, then, fancy such a man as married and undone; feeding the multifold fancies of a varying woman; meekly obeying when she crieth, "My lord, the babe lacks sport, go, dandle him awhile!" and become, in place of a full, fame-trumpeted nobility, but the shadow of an exacting wife? Monstrous! impossible! Yet if certainty may be had, certainty shall be got. Meanwhile mine errand waiteth. Ha! hither ambleth the mincing tirewoman; she can speed me to her mistress.

Enter BERTHALIND.

God help us; I would as lief spit on as speak to her.

Berthalind.—(*aside*)—That surly clown. Where is Bernardo?

Drogo.—Good day, Mistress Berthalind. Can you direct me to the Lady Eunonia? I bear a message from my lord.

Berthalind.—God save you, Master Drogo, she may hardly see the messenger.

Drogo.—Wherefore?

Berthalind.—In truth, my mistress is in no mood to receive that she likes not.

Drogo.—She is not asked to like or dislike; but merely hear a compliment which, perchance, the Lord Raymond deigneth to bestow.

Berthalind.—His compliments will fall flat; for this I say, that though, poor soul, she may marry him, yet can she never love him.

Drogo.—Poor soul? nay! Heaven forefend it!

Berthalind.—Go thy ways, Master Ignorance! I had forgot thou wert new here, and blind of the matter.

Drogo.—Well, Mistress Impudence, an 'tis of marriage thou speakest, though strange to the place I have already heard enough concerning it, nor would dwell longer on so melancholy a subject.

Berthalind.—Melancholy enough, in truth; though it doth surprise me to hear such an admission from thyself.

Drogo.—What! know you not I detest your chattering sex, that cannot plainly answer a plain question without mouthing disquisitions concerning other folks' business!

Berthalind.—What doth the man want?

Drogo.—The man doth want but a straight direction to the Lady Eunonia who, will-she nill-she, shall hear my message.

Enter BERNARDO *behind them.*

Berthalind.—What? wouldst thou carry a boudoir by storm?

Drogo.—By siege and sack if 'twere needful!—give me mine answer!

Bernardo.—(*aside*)—His answer! and but yestereve she promised me in place of truant Giles! Oh, scandalous!

Berthalind.—Why, Master Bear, go thou along the corridor yonder, then, turning to the right, lift a hanging tapestry, and, if thy rough tongue is able to pre-

fer a smoother request, the wench who waiteth there will take thee to my lady.

Drogo.—A thousand thanks, Mistress Berthalind! in so much hast thou charmed me.

Berthalind.—Why truly, Master Drogo, I cannot well refuse even thy—

Bernardo.—(*coming forward*)—Faithless hussy! art thou sugaring this fellow also?

Drogo.—This fellow! prithee, sir, what fellow art thou?

Bernardo.—One who will score thy hide for thee, if thou darest again to address this lady or receive her replies.

Berthalind.—Thou art overhasty, Bernardo; he but asked me—

Drogo.—A plain question, sirrah! in the answering whereof this chattering magpie but delayed an honest man.

Bernardo.—A civiller tongue would better become thee, friend; or, by St. Jago, I will split it to improve thy speech!

Drogo.—What! a miserable Spaniard beard a Norman in Normandy! by the great archangel, I will stuff Saint Jago down thy throat!

Bernardo.—Cain was not Abel, thou swaggerer! spell me that.

Berthalind.—Nay, nay, good gentlemen—'tis all nothing; let me explain—

Drogo.—Nothing? by Heaven he hath insulted me, and shall smart!

Bernardo.—Go behind the arras, Berthalind, while I chastise this bragging savage!

Drogo.—Bragging savage! Draw, sir! draw!

Bernardo.—None more ready! say thy prayers.

Berthalind.—Help! help!

They draw and fight.

Stay, good gentlemen, both! ye quarrel for naught!
Put up your swords, or I will call Lord Hugo!
Bernardo! Bernardo! lovest thou me not? Oh,
Bernardo! he will kill thee!

Exeunt, Drogo and Bernardo fighting.

SCENE II.—*Raymond's Apartment in the Castle.*

RAYMOND, *and* STEPHEN *the notary.*

Stephen.—My lord, the instruments are all complete,
And need but signature and seal.
Raymond.— The last
De Ver of Ver! Complete, thou saidst? well, bring
The parchments hither—nay, but hold awhile!
When I do call, good Stephen, be prepared.
Stephen.—My lord, my father was your father's clerk
As I am yours; our service makes me bold
To press again remonstrance and entreaty
Concerning this most ill-advised resolve.
What! with a pen-stroke disenfeoff De Ver
Of all the rich possessions held and gained
By splendid courage, noble loyalty,
Sagacious handling, honourable endeavour;
Not only of to-day, but stretching back
Through a long line of princely ancestors?
Raymond.—Deem not, good Stephen, that this act of mine
Is aught but well-considered; where thou dost grope
Confounded 'mid the dark, I, who have kept
With straining eyes long vigils of the night,

Discern the dawning of another day.
Is it a riddle to thee? let it pass,
Nor fret thyself with guesses or desire
Of further knowledge. For the good intent
Thine urgings bear me I do give thee thanks;
Yet though thou art a man well skilled in law,
Shrewd, thoughtful, honest, here thy judgment halts.
Is that perforce the Best which as the Best
May apprehended be by subtile minds?
Mine action gaineth me sure harbour e'en
Where thou dost hold me wrecked. So much I say—
No more. Content thee Stephen—go—be near
When I shall call thee.

Stephen.— Bitter is the task
To me my lord.

Raymond.— Man! is our life all sweet?
Is duty less because unpalatable?
Parley not further—I will have thy work
Shaped to my liking, nor will show thee why.

Stephen.—God save your worship.

Exit STEPHEN.

Raymond.— Kindly fool, 'twere base
To blame his friendship; why, to him the heavens
And earth will wear new aspect when no more
Is Raymond Lord of Ver. No other course!
This only promiseth the peace I found
And lost in loving her. Too old! too old!
The world's bright colours glare my weary eyes!
I will not saunter down her common ways
Leaning on Fortune. What! is Raymond formed
Of weaker stuff than Lionel, who could tread

His heart beneath him in the dust? Shall she,
Eunonia, then, out-hero me? for she could join
In such a sacrifice as ne'er the world
Had known—For what? For honour—duty! things
Which blazoning my ambition spurred me on
Through years of toil to scorn the evil, hold
The good, and make temptation idle. Steeled
I deemed myself—how easy 'twere to break
The bonds of resolution when the hues
Of that fair life still in my grasp array
The future with their glory. O my love!
Though thou canst love me not, thy happiness
To me is dearer than mine own! For thee
Do I resign the charmed old castle where
My childhood laughed, the wealth so hardly earned,
The fame and splendour won by high resolves
Forced to successful end, the possible,
Yea, sure, magnificence of coming Time,
That crown of effort blessing human hands
The perfect consummation of their labour.
No empty finery, for he hath learnt
Their regal value whose career began
In poverty and debt; but take them, thou
Who art Eunonia's love, yet lacking these
Lack power to gain thy bride. O happy boy,
Take them and her! despite the niggard heart
Whose beatings thrill insatiable desire
Through every sense and fibre—as the rays
Of light leaven space. Ay, and as they consume
The orbs which feed them yet impinging deal
Life everywhere, this higher love of mine
Shall in the depths of those true lovers' woe
Create new worlds of unimagin'd bliss.

And it may be that if the residue
Of life is vowed to holy preparation,
When other forms of being garb the soul
Through ever-widening cycles passing on
To gradual perfectness; no longer swayed
By human feelings, I shall rest content
In her pure friendship, wishing naught beyond.
Ralpho Gonsalamos, thou didst find peace
Where peace is only found!

Lionel.—(*within*)— My lord!

Raymond.— Who calls?
Stephen? not yet—

Lionel.— 'Tis Lionel.

Raymond.— Sir Lionel?
Then enter.

Enter LIONEL.

Wert thou not asleep within?

Lionel.—'Twas so, my lord, but wearied of my couch
After thou issuedst with the notary—
And Drogo also gone—I rose to taste
Again the air and sunshine.

Raymond.— Were it wise—
Thus late recovered from a grievous ill—
So sudden a venture?

Lionel.— Scarcely wise, perhaps;
But my limbs ached for simple need of change,
And, faith, they dragged me forth most willingly.
Why stand you so perturbed, my lord? The thing
Hath trivial grown—at least as others read it.

Raymond.—Trivial? What? did Hugo—

Lionel.— As I passed
Round the first buttress face to face we stood,

My lord and I! and while I gasped distraught
For want of fit invention to explain
The reason of my presence, he supplied
The story to his liking, nor did meet
With contradiction.

Raymond.— Blameless eyes mark not
The blame of others! Heaven is merciful.

Lionel.—He will be here, my lord, and quickly, bent
On converse. I have stolen away to beg
One last, especial favour—it is this,
That when he cometh thou wilt urge his grace
To overlook my disobedient deed
In breaking his most strict command. In truth,
But for this chance I had been afar by now—
I cannot stay, my lord, and he would have me!

Raymond.—Nay, that I will not, thou art mad again.

Lionel.—Then lacking his forgiveness will I go;
Farewell, my lord.

Raymond.— Delirium!

Lionel.— Doubly sane,
For I, God help me, can resolve and do it!

Raymond.—What wouldst thou fly from? Am I not thy friend?

Lionel.—Yea, friend, yet enemy, if thou shouldst seek
To hinder me in this.

Raymond.—(*aside*)— He knoweth not
The issue of his action!

Lionel.— Must I go
Sans leave-taking? it shall content me well
If thou art suited? Evil hast thou done,
And good to me, Lord Raymond. I am not
An ingrate, yet the one may countervail
The other! Thou art rich and famous, I

Am poor and tainted with a sire's dishonour;
Yet were thy fortune trebled and mine own
Still baser, save for one thing, I would not change
Estate with thee this day!

Raymond.—(*aside*)— O poor, galled heart!
Too well I know it. (*To Lionel.*)—Lionel, none need wish
To change with me! I cannot quarrel now,
Wert thou to strike me. Do not go, for much
Have I to tell thee.

Lionel.— Nothing canst thou say
That I desire to hear.

Raymond.— Ungracious yet?
Though we have mutually and foolishly,
Since thy recovery, shunned all speech of what
Most needeth speech; for my soul's weal and thine,
No longer may dull silence bar the door
Between us. Ever since that miserable hour
When our swords crossed beneath these peaceful walls
My life hath been like Cain's.

Enter HUGO.

Lionel.— 'Twas in fair fight,
My lord, the hurt was given.

Hugo.— Be sure of that!
This royal hand ne'er took the scurviest foe
At disadvantage.

Raymond.— Hugo? thou?

Lionel.— My lord?

Hugo.—Lionel doth doubtless learn some high exploit
Done by thy matchless valour—is't not so?

Nay, nay, 'tis plain! What! thought you he would smite
In any way but open? Why, lad, he,
Thy captain there, had battled Hercules
Nor yielded! Now I swear thou couldst
So hold thy peace! Faith, though, 'twere hardly wrought
Against me to withdraw thy fellowship
For nursing of the youngster! Are we bare
Of women in the place?

Raymond.— Dear Hugo—

Hugo.— Nay,
My crow is plucked! waste ne'er a word thereon,
But tell me if in truth thou canst divine
How chanced the hurt?

Raymond.— Most easily, alas!

Hugo.—What, sadly man? thou canst not! wait awhile
Till years have gleaned new wisdom. Plain to me,
Not therefore plain to thee!

Lionel.—(*aside*)— Oh, how escape!

Hugo.—Shortly 'twas thus—that in the darkness he,
Elated with the thought of knightly prowess,
Nor lacking wine perchance, fell foul of what
Seemed some grim foe, and dashed upon
A hard-grained tree or harder wall. Deny
This an thou canst! Nay, be not shamed;
We all have done it in the sprightlier time.

Lionel.—Denial may not serve me.

Hugo.— No, in faith!
Then, Raymond, as thou cam'st from prayer, and saw
Young Lionel's body prone across the path,
Like the Samaritan of old, and moved

To utter kindness by fresh impulse rained
In holy psalm and sermon on thine heart,
Thou liftedst him within thine arms and bore
To refuge, stanched his wound, and nursed
Him day and night most tenderly.

Lionel.— 'Tis true.

Raymond.—True and not true—

Lionel.—(*to Raymond*)— No more!

Hugo.— And firmly fine
In feeling as in deed, thou didst conceal
The matter, Raymond, knowing well that I
Had suffered with the lad whose comely face
Hath brightened home and hearth these many years.
Though sure and fast above all earthly ties
Is friendship; yet, for the honour of mine house
And love I bear thee, would my soul be fain
To weld the chain still closer by the link
Of golden marriage, wherefore let me press
The speedy disposition of affairs
Nor longer make delay.

Enter STEPHEN.

Raymond.— 'Tis done. I wait
But for the notary's completed work;
And fear not that Eunonia's weal, old friend,
Could ever be forgotten.

Stephen.— Pardon me,
My lord, methought 'twere best—the writings—

Raymond.— Fetch
Them hither.

Exit STEPHEN.

Lionel.—By your leaves I will withdraw.

Hugo.—Nay, I go with thee.

Raymond.—(*to Lionel*)— Tarry, Lionel; keep
Our converse—trust me, I have much to say
Of what may touch thee deeply.
Lionel.—(*to Raymond*)— An I hear
Thy voice no more 'twere best.
Hugo.— Conclude, conclude.
Raymond.—(*to Lionel*)—Thou know'st not what thou doest!
Hugo.— I will away
And leave ye both together.
Lionel.— No, my lord,
Thanks for thy courtesy, but nothing breeds
Desire in me of private speech—
Raymond.— What! naught?
Lionel.—With the Lord Raymond; let us now be gone.

Enter STEPHEN.

Raymond.—Stephen? is it so near me? Hugo de St. Maur,
By all the brotherhood of younger days,
By all the sacred friendship which hath lit
Our lives, I charge thee as a man unknowing
If ever past our present parting we
Shall meet again—I charge thee to observe
The fixed conditions of these instruments,
Which made in purest love of thee and thine,
Will in their due effect give fit expression
Unto my deep, deliberate resolve.
Hugo.—Why we shall meet bound stronglier than before,
In tenderer friendship, living in my child
When I am gone. Say, hath the man of law
With his provisoes, alsoes, howsoevers,
Dog Latin, and old French o'erawed thy mind,

That settlements pre-marital have grown
Beyond their import weighty? Tush! defy
The fiend.

Raymond.— Bear with me, it may rightly be—
How can they know! O Hugo, fare thee well
Till all shall be accomplisht!

Hugo.— Notary,
Is thy craft answerable for this?

Raymond.— Sir Lionel,
Wilt thou fulfil one poor request of mine?

Hugo.—That shall he. I will promise for him.

Raymond.— Then
I leave it so. Good Stephen here e'er long
Will publish in the pictured gallery
Before the household, what my hand and seal
Upon these parchments will effect this day.
It is my wish, since Lionel doth not speak,
That thou, dear Hugo, take him thither to hear
Results which do concern him mightily.

Lionel.—Be not so hard, my lord, I will attend.

Raymond.—I thank thee, Lionel. Oh, my friends, 'tis well!
And if I seem beyond my usual wont
To feel the things which crowd the passing hour,
Or bear the triumph sadly, be assured
My sense and powers are unimpaired, and grasp
Their purposes unfalteringly resolved—
Sane and serene. Farewell, farewell.

Lionel.— Farewell.

Hugo.—If 'tis thy humour, Raymond, then, farewell.

Exeunt HUGO *and* LIONEL.

Raymond.—Quick, Stephen!

Stephen hands him parchments.

Hath each wish of mine herein
A legal issue?

Stephen.— Certainly, my lord.

Raymond.—These the indentures?

Stephen.— These are they, my lord.

Raymond.—Lend me thy pen—now witness—this my hand
And seal.

Affixes them.

'Tis done, 'tis done! Thou churlish boy
Thus I requite thee.

Stephen.— Why not bid me tear
The hellish writings in a million fragments!

Raymond.—Nay, Stephen, they are more divine than aught
Thou ever didst. Most carefully explain
The purport of my deed as I have said
Already. Fail me not, for thou above
The followers of thy lore art honest. Haste!
The payment of thy labour waits within.
Now to deliver her, then all is finished!

Exeunt.

SCENE III.—*A Passage in the Castle.*

DROGO.

Drogo.—The Spaniard shall remember me—well for him we were parted. The Lady Eunonia is comely enough spite of her sad eyes, and pleasant-spoken, withal, as speech goeth among them. Still, even an amiable toleration of the sex need not weakly

dribble into marriage. If by dallying I have not missed my lord, he should according to his intention pass this place, and on the instant. Unforeseen waiting is not dallying, and Count Hugo's being with the lady was cause sufficient for delay, seeing that until he withdrew I could not be received privately as my message required. Ha, 'tis a young gosling would carry needless blame! Hither he cometh—courage Drogo, courage! he can but spurn thee, and that is none of his custom.

Enter RAYMOND.

My lord, the Lady Eunonia will await your worship presently in the pictured gallery.

Raymond.—'Tis good, old dog! wilt thou like thy new master—young, handsome, and brave?

Drogo.—I have but one master.

Raymond.—In heaven?

Drogo.—Nay, I know nothing thereof; 'tis your worship of whom I speak.

Raymond.—My worship will no longer be thy master, so look and do good service wherever it is claimed.

Drogo.—None may claim my service but my lord; and none else shall ever have it.

Raymond.—What! if the parchments be duly sealed and attested, and the notary so proclaim it? Wilt thou not fall down and reverence gold?

Drogo.—Love made my heart your worship's; how can gold buy it?

Raymond.—One man living who adoreth not the common idol! Tried old friend, I have but mocked thee! No, Drogo, see—I have left that behind me which shall buy land enough to keep thee be-

yond any master's whims and pettishness. Away now to the notary, he is in my chamber, and demand thy property from him. He hath my commands, and knoweth how to act. Delay not. Time is pressing me sore and I have far to go ere the night close. No, no, Drogo, I would not leave my faithful watch-dog to a new master's mercies.

Drogo.—These sayings are dark, my lord!

Raymond.—What? plainlier man? He loveth plain-speaking also! a man among a thousand!

Drogo.—I was never good at riddlement—straight cut-and-thrust talk suiteth me best.

Raymond.—Did I not send thee to the notary? He hath reasons at so much a folio, and knoweth my mind beside.

Drogo.—Master Stephen is a decent soul, though somewhat dry; yet, my lord, speak fairly unto me, nor leave me longer with the heartache.

Raymond.—Well then, in homely speech, dear companion, trusty servant, faithful watch-dog, loving Drogo, thou and I stand now face to face for the last time on earth; in truth, good fellow, we must part.

Drogo.—Part, my lord? why? what have I done?

Raymond.—'Tis not what thou hast done, but what I have done which maketh such dealing necessary.

Drogo.—Whither go you, my lord?

Raymond.—Ask me not.

Drogo.—Art thou going far?

Raymond.—So far, that all which was will never be again!

Drogo.—May I not go also?

Raymond.—Thou mayest not.

Drogo.—Why may I not?

Raymond.—Drogo, year after year hast thou served me well, but never yet didst thou question my commands. Away to the notary—live, prosper, and be happy. I will pray for thee and thou shalt have peace. Forget me, Drogo—there—farewell.

Drogo.—Lord Raymond, many a year yet shall I serve thee better! What! leave thee in my scarred age who art my sun, my pride, my glory, the centre of my humble thoughts, my dearest master? Surely, my lord, thou wilt not cast me off without a reason!

Raymond.—I cannot give thee any.

Drogo.—Then will I follow thee wherever thou dost go, and live on garbage so I may see thy face were it only once a twelvemonth!

Raymond.—Heavens! there is no escape! Drogo, I have resigned this day my rank and riches, and shall pass the rest of earthly life in some calm monastery, against which the waves of human folly may break but never overwhelm. Canst thou comprehend? I am no longer Raymond, Lord of Ver, but a poor monk—an unworthy brother of thine own. How then can I need thee further?

Drogo.—Amazing! how canst thou need me further? Didst thou think that change of estate in thee could change Drogo? Why, thou wilt need me more than ever. I will not leave thee, dear master, while I have breath to say it!

Raymond.—Wouldst thou be a monk, too, and handle rosaries instead of swords? counting beads in place of the slain, and living in an atmosphere where never cometh scent of danger? Bethink thee, man, nor utterly be lost.

Drogo.—Like thyself I have no kith nor kin. Why,

should I leave thee? Let me go with thee, and I will e'en be a bald friar if 'tis in thy company! Oh, my lord, thou knowest not how impossible 'tis for me to part from thee while I am a living soul!

Raymond.—Must I give way? 'tis folly, Drogo! Good Drogo, look you, I leave you well provided, and independent of the world. Better than any man's service will be thine own.

Drogo.—I care not! I will with thee wherever thou goest—though thou trample on me, though I go naked, though devils bar the way! I cannot leave thee!

Raymond.—Oh, then, habet! Thou doest thyself shameful despite! To the horses and there tarry. I will join thee soon. Away!

Drogo.—Dear lord, beyond all thanks will I prove my gratitude for this!

Exeunt.

SCENE IV.—*The Pictured Gallery in Count Hugo's Castle.*

EUNONIA.

Eunonia.—Would that submission brought oblivion too!
How vain the bitter striving! What I seek
To bury with the desolated past
Is disentomb'd by every pitiless knell
Which tolls the tale of time, and bleeding wounds
Are with new agonies reopened, making
My wild endeavours to forget effectless.
There! we had parted and the horrible pang
Was over—though it killed us it was done.
Then came Gerard's entreaty, and ere numbed
To cold passivity, that mad, white face
Peered, like the spirit of Lionel groping lost

'Mid deathly presences, until again
He found me on his bosom. Now, my father,
As with good tidings, telleth how my love
Was dashed against a tree, and will remain
To view my marriage with Lord Raymond! God!
I durst not meet the dawn of such a day
Were it with Lionel possible; look Thou
To that!—a monstrous thing! a dream! my sire's
Contriving—insupportable! Avaunt!
Dishonouring phantom! I will not believe it!
Must the clogg'd wheel of Destiny grind on
To sure fulfilment of a dreaded morrow?
O that the last great judgment-day could burst
The skies this moment, hurling mountains down
And making every power of Nature useless,
Decrepid, dead, unacting!—then this base,
This pitiful life were done and all were over.
Alas! the Present will not pass, his wish
Constraineth me—my future lord. Oh! shame
That thus obediently I come, nor Heaven
Doth slay me! How I yearned he might delay
Still further! Mercy, there is none for me;
It must be borne—my father's bond—the troth
Pledged sacredly—Lionel's heroic words—

Enter RAYMOND.

No looking back! Oh, Raymond, didst thou know,
Surely thy manhood had vouchsafed release!

Raymond.—(*aside*)—Vouchsafed release? how doubly hard the task
When her too heavenly face is nigh! Be still
Tumultuous heart, nor altogether choke

My speech with these fierce beatings. (*To Eunonia*)
Lady, thou
Hast deigned to meet me here.
Eunonia.— Thy messager,
My lord, did so direct.
Raymond.— Direct? Entreaty
Was that wherewith I charged him.
Eunonia.— Alike the end.
Raymond.—Nay, if those tones were not thine own, how harsh
Might seem their import; but thy voice, or ire
Or love compelled it, on mine ear would fall
As filled with melody divine.
Eunonia.— My lord,
I am but weak and sick; if anywise
The business causing this our interview
Could be completed with convenient speed,
It were most grateful to me.
Raymond.— Sayest thou so?
It would indeed be well, and shall be well.
'Tis of thy marriage—
Eunonia.— Lord Raymond, spare me that!
I know the tie which binds us—be thou sure
Thereof—but, give me leave, this wondrous change
Which so exalts the maiden to a wife
Is one which suiteth meditation best;
In truth, I cannot talk thereon with thee.
Be thou contented—let the hour be fixed,
I shall not fail. Oh, do not press, my lord,
For previous wooing—let it go; so thou
Do gather fruit, what matter if thy hand
Hath never toiled in tillage.

Raymond.— O my love!
My love! I am content! I am content—
God help me an it should be otherwise—
Content to lose thee.
Eunonia.— What, my lord?
Raymond.— Content
To lose thee—to release thee—to restore
Thy Lionel to thee; will not that suffice?
Eunonia.—Such mockery ill befits thee; it were best,
My lord, to have this meeting overpast.
Raymond.—'Twere wholly best! Yet be thou sure of this,
Thy Lionel's love to mine—why, what are words?
Shall I be bragging? Fie! 'twere vile.
Eunonia.— My lord,
I do beseech thee let the business rest,
Another day may serve.
Raymond.— No, no; to-day!
To-day, to-day! to-morrow? what is that?
Eunonia.—Thy words are strange, my lord.
Raymond.— They shall be clear.
Forgive me, I will crush it under foot—
Great God, 'tis horrible! So lovely fair,
And pale, and sad, and dark-ringed eyes—and done
By me! Oh, pardon, pardon, for the sin
Of loving thee, and all the miserable
Result! but, by the Eternal Father, 'twas
In ignorance that thou hadst given thy heart
To one more worthy.
Eunonia.—(*aside*)— Is it then discovered?
Raymond.—Had I but known! I only knew too late.
Eunonia.—My lord, wouldst thou say more?
Raymond.— Thy father woke

My slumbering senses, and I gazed and loved—
What else were possible? He pressed the pledge
So lightly spoken, or it had never been.
Through weary years of war my yearning soul
Had turned to some bright future where true Peace
Should bless me, and the happy daytime glide
To happier dark, and Ver's old castle ring
With rosy children's laughter: such a dream
As comes to toiling men amid their mirk
And seeming endless labour—but a dream.
Yet when that sunshine morning I beheld
With fresh-awaked perception thy dear form,
The glory of thy beauty, and the light
Of those pure eyes, I deemed my dream fulfill'd,
Nor doubted. Was it base in me to feel
The headlong current of a passionate love?
Why didst thou charm me back to glowing youth
And make existence rapture? Ask me not
How 'twas discovered, but full soon I knew
My stranger step was trampling on the hopes
Of two united hearts—all innocently,
As God shall judge us! and this day I come
To make thee reparation.

Eunonia.— Oh, my lord,
I have maligned thee!—vilely, kindlessly!

Raymond.—I do release thee in the sight of Heaven
From any bond of marriage to myself,
And unto Lionel do restore thee now—
My love! my only love!

Eunonia.— O noble Raymond!
What hast thou given!

Raymond.— Eunonia! dare my lips
Take that dear name thus boldly?—think of me

As one who loved thee more than any man
E'er loved a woman. Oh, thou hast the proof
In this!

Eunonia.— I was not worthy, thou art high
Above—forgive my cruel words.

Raymond.— Forgive?
Nay, speak for ever!

Eunonia.— Thanks are beggarly!
How recompense thy deed?

Raymond.— My recompense
Is in thy happiness. Oh love, and live
Belov'd; and be to Lionel all I would
Thou wert to me. As years shall pass
In sheen and shadow do thou sometimes turn
Aside when the day dies, and breathe a prayer
For Raymond, so before the throne of Him
Who made us what we are, our spirits will
Commingle.

Eunonia.— Whither goest thou?

Raymond.— Should I stay
To cloud thy life? One kiss!—yet I can go!
Father, bless Thou my darling! Oh, farewell.

Exit RAYMOND.

Eunonia.—There is none like thee! gone? Are angels more
Than he? Released! and Lionel mine?

Enter HUGO, LIONEL, GERARD, STEPHEN, BERTHALIND, BERNARDO, *and Servants.*

His love
Hath whelm'd me. Phantasy! nay, no vision—see
Who come—Lionel among them, and my father!
What meaneth this?

Stephen.— The place and time appointed.

Hugo.—Good notary, do thine errand—ha, my child!
Remain—be sure the present business thee
Concerneth.
Stephen.— Shall I now declare the pith
And sinew of the matter, or peruse
These legal covenants?
Hugo.— They may suffice
To authenticate thy speech; where is Lord Raymond?
Stephen.—He comes not hithe
Hugo.— And the reason?
Stephen.— That,
He only knoweth—'twas his will.
Hugo.— A whim!
He is full of fancies—so be it! Say on,
Good Stephen, we attend thee.
Lioncl.—(*aside*)— Near me now,
And peerless in her beauty—but removed
As Tophet yawned between us!
Eunonia.—(*aside*)— Sad and pale,
Yet grief is slain by noble Raymond's hand!
Stephen.—Count Hugo and all persons toward! 'tis
Well known that short while gone Lord Raymond
Summoned
My presence here, and hath employed my skill
In many weighty matters of his pleasure;
Results whereof are these most binding acts,
Which do consolidate his wishes into
Their strict expression by our laws, thereby
Conforming to his often-urged instructions—
So much for warranty. You, my good lord,
And eke Sir Lionel, can be witnesses
That the illustrious Raymond, Lord of Ver,

Commanded me to publish in this place
Before the household, what his hand and seal
Affixed to these grave parchments had accomplished.

Hugo.—I can bear witness.

Lionel.— I, as well.

Stephen.— Withal,
Was it not clearly evident that my lord
In sanity and health expressed his will
Most excellently accompanied by reason?

Hugo.—No saner nor more reasonable man alive!

Lionel.—In truth, Lord Raymond did discourse as one
Who held some gracious end with firm resolve
Of manly intellect.

Stephen.— Thanks for the proof.
Now hearken! Raymond, late of Ver, by deed
Of gift, attendant settlements, and all
Such legal statutes as are necessary,
Doth freely give, convey, confirm, and grant
His whole possessions, hereditaments;
Corporeal, incorporeal, personal
Estate, choses in action or possession;
Both chattels real and chattels personal—
In brief, whatever thing on earth was his,
Unto, mark this, Sir Lionel de Toesni,
To have, hold, and enjoy, himself and heirs
For ever:

Hugo.— Heavens! 'tis false, thou evil scribe!

Lionel.—It chokes me! What? from Raymond?

Eunonia.— Oh, 'tis love
As Christ's divine!

Hugo.— 'S death, thou imposture! close
Thy lying mouth!

Stephen.— I do not lie, my lord;
These instruments attest the utter truth
Of every word. Take them and read—see here
The signature and seal.
Lionel.— All well agrees
With his late sayings.
Hugo.— Forgery! Gerard!
Commit him to the dungeon!
Stephen.— No, my lord;
I am Sir Lionel's man—Lord Raymond so
His followers willed.
Hugo.— Where is my friend?
Stephen.— My lord,
I know not.
Hugo.— A vile murderer's plot! and thou,
Sir Lionel, hast a hand. Find me Lord Raymond.
For till himself shall swear the verity
Of this, may hell be mine if I believe it!

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Monastery, Mount St. Michael.*
(*The Common-room.*)

ANSELMO *and* DROGO, *the latter cleaning some large candlesticks.*

Anselmo.—Thou art unlearn'd, despite my toil good brother!
These candlesticks placed round his corse who sped
But yesterday from death to life, do sign
That Christians look for light beyond the grave.
Drogo.—I had forgot—good Robert, kindly abbot,
May he find rest among the saints in bliss!

Anselmo.—That Ambrose should be chosen to his throne
By all the chapter is a precedent
Most dangerous.
Drogo.— And wherefore, holy prior?
My noble lord hath borne the yoke and filled
His place so mannered with true sanctity
That Abbot John, of Otterton, in Devon,
Where we did first profess—an Englishman
And prejudiced against our nation—writ
With his own hand most special commendations
Unto our careful abbot, who in turn
Bore him such reverence as to publicly
Name him successor; and that choice, thou sayest
Hath by the chapter been confirmed.
Anselmo.— Thy lord?
Who is thy noble lord? Beraldus, thou
Wilt not remember that a man becoming
A monk relinquisheth possessions, name,
And everything he calleth his; nor hath
His daily necessaries supplied but through
The hands of spiritual fathers at command
Of their Superior. All are equal here
Before the God Who made us! See thy tongue
Offendeth not again, or thou shalt straight
Do penance in the solitary cell.
Drogo.—I will endeavour, though, meseems, my lord
Hath grown but nobler since he wore this frock
And knelt the humblest monk amid us all.
Anselmo.—Yet hath he but renounced the world two years,
While thrice that time I have been prior here,
And, till he came, assured the higher seat—
The abbey hath but known him seven months past.

Drogo.—Ay, but an exile of one year in England
Weareth both flesh and spirit more than ten
Breathed wholesomely in Normandy; my lord
Was aged and weakened much thereby—I pray
That in this native and more bracing air
He may eftsoons recover.

Anselmo.— Still "my lord"?
Thou art incorrigible! Hast thou also cleans'd
The holy-water basins, incense-burners,
Lamps, chalices, and other sacred vessels
Against the requiem?

Drogo.— Save the monstrance, all.

Anselmo.—Bear these within, and with a silken cloth
Make clean the altar and the pyx thereon;
And for the froward titling of a monk—
One brother Ambrose—in the choir to-night
Carry a lantern, so the light shall keep
Thy sin in due remembrance, and, beside,
Rouse brethren who seek slumber.

Drogo.—(*aside*)— I shall yet
Demand my secular habit!

Exit DROGO.

Anselmo.— What saith John?
"Another is preferr'd before me"? Why?
There is no reason which a just account
May urge herein. Strange that mine ancient foe
Should worst me in this place! What need could rise
For Hugo de St. Maur to ask with tears
If Raymond were a habitant—as well
I do remember—and for months renew
His pettish questioning? Is Raymond now,

As broken Ambrose, worth my envy? he
Is bound too surely for the unseen land.
Yet when St. Maur may meet these eyes again,
I shall acquaint him of our new-made abbot,
Whose heart, methinks, too fondly beats accord
With the low hopes and loves of men and women.
Was he not pledged in marriage to some dame?
Ha! they return.

Enter RAYMOND, THOMAS, WITMUND, *and other monks.*

Till one hath formal place
Authority is mine; an chance reveal
Suspected weakness, I will test him well.

Thomas.—Nay, thou canst have no scruple! Father Robert
When at my hands he took viaticum
And blest me, whispered "Ambrose" faintly, thus,
While death drew on him; meaning that his will
As previously expounded was that thou,
Dear brother Ambrose, in his place shouldst be
Our abbot, bishop, pastor, master, head.
The choice is now confirmed by consistory
Of brethren formed obedient to the rule
Of sainted Benedict, wherefore we beg
Thine honourable acceptance, and will then
Present thee duteously for installation.

Witmund.—Yea, brother; in our voices hear the wish
Consentient of our whole fraternity;
Nor let humility annul the act
Which surely is approved by God Himself.

Thomas.—Speak, Master Prior, and overcome his doubt.

Anselmo.—'Tis as thou hearest, though perchance thy thoughts
Admonish thee how, passing late received
Into the bosom of our holy Mother,
It were a great and grievous sin to take
The sacred office with a wavering mind
Still moved by freshly-quitted lusts. For this,
If my experience with thine own should fit,
Is where we fail year after year, until
By grace continual bound to Christ and all
The company of saints, our hearts no more
Respond to weak emotions, and the body
New-born puts off the old Adam and purely waits
A bride arrayed to meet her heavenly Bridegroom.

Witmund.—But, reverend prior, our gentle brother here
Hath shown such constancy of holiness
As cometh not from those who with an eye
Turned backward to the world profess our life.

Thomas.—Although so short a time before our face,
His every deed hath been a testimony
That if perfection in the holy things
Whereto we strive with groaning had been given
To man, the same were Ambrose.

Anselmo.— Ay, but flesh
Is frail till well inured in sanctity!
I would be last gainsaying any worth
In any brother, and indeed my love
For him in this may speak which would deplore
Aught seeming failure in the best attempt
Of inexperience to essay control
Of this great abbey.

Thomas.— Failure?

Witmund.— Not with him!

Raymond.—How richly do ye clothe my nakedness,
Kind brothers, and have utterly put by
My weakness and unfitness—charity
Which covereth up the vile, and magnifies
Half-deadened evil into perfect good!
Anselmo.—Most wisely spoken, brother.
Raymond.— Not for me
The abbot's chair, though with his dying breath
Our happier father chose me, and the monks,
Adopting his desire, do by ye twain
Seek my acceptance! It were vain, dear friends,
For one so worn and weary to attempt it!
Nay, but remember, from the English land
I hastened, knowing well mine earthly days
Drew to another dawn, and hither prest
By a fierce yearning to bid life "adieu"
In sight of Normandy, my country.
Anselmo.— That
Did reach mine ear aforetime.
Raymond.— Else, as now,
My tongue had never needed adequate words
To tell my poor heart's gratitude for this
Most precious of your many courtesies.
Witmund.—Our father Robert was not strong.
Anselmo.— Yet lithe
And passing active.
Thomas.— But a feeble man—
"My grace shall be sufficient," saith the Lord—
Thou dost abase thyself.
Anselmo.— The rarer wisdom.
Raymond.—Shall then a stranger, one so little known
Among ye be assigned the government?
Is there no holier man within the place?

None more deserving preference that ye seek
The last and most unworthy?

Thomas.— 'Tis of right—
Expressly writ by sainted Benedict,
That should the brotherhood be minded, they
May choose the last new-comer.

Witmund.— And 'twas done
Ofttimes in other abbeys and our own.

Raymond.—Where is necessity? The reverend prior
Standeth before us well-approved by word
And deed, a noble soldier in Christ's army.
Meseemeth, far beyond mere human choice,
The hand of God doth witness this is he
Who should be abbot.

Anselmo.— Thou art kind.

Raymond.— In truth,
Ye have forgotten, while our father lay
Long ailing his lieutenant faithfully
Performed all duties of the sacred seat,
And now, until 'tis filled, is by the canon
Accredited our lawful ruler. Who
Can cast a stone against his any act?
Hath he not served our welfare and the faith's
With single heart? given firm example? borne
The cross in tears and fasting, yet observed
With pure religion and true dignity
The functions of his office? shall the work
Of years, wherein he was confirmed with each
Recurring day a minister of heaven,
Be lightly valued? Nay, I do ye wrong
To deem it possible! No abbotship
For me, but if ye do esteem my wish,

However lightly, bear this answer back,
And pray the chapter to elect Anselmo.

Thomas.—Our reverend brother is most highly held;
In verity his actions speak for him,
But it is somewhat feared he would revert
Unto the ancient, unendurable
Interpretation of Saint Benedict's
Familiar canons.

Witmund.— Placing on our shoulders
Intolerable burdens, so the weak
Shall perish by the way.

Thomas.— We do refuse
To take the meats and raiment which sufficed
Egyptian hermits as appropriate here
In this our frosty clime.

Anselmo.— No violent
Constraint I seek, but undeniably
We have professed the rule of Benedict
Yet fail in strict observance.

Raymond.— Why, herein
The reverend prior's zeal is clear; and best,
Dear brothers, such a man should be supreme
Than one who might by natural wishes gauge
Your spiritual welfare. It was true
And wisely spoken that till well inured
In patient godliness the flesh is weak.
For often when alone I pace atop
The scarpéd rock which sheers into the whirl
Of waters do I dream of what hath been,
What might have been, and what now is, with all
The passionate longing and regret of mere
Humanity! Yea, though the world is dead

To me and I to it as if the flowers
Bloomed o'er my grave.

Enter Janitor, with LIONEL, EUNONIA, *and* GERARD *following.*

Thomas.— In sorrow have we heard
Thine answer.

Janitor.— My lord prior and holy masters,
Here be a couple craving marriage-rites,
Nor will they be denied.

Lionel.— Most pious father,
'Tis as he sayeth—we have crossed the Gréve
At peril of our lives to seek secure
Performance of the sacred ceremony.
Haste of thy charity, ere, hurrying on,
A mulish sire may overtake and vex
Your ears with anger!

Raymond.—(*aside*)— God have mercy! She
Again? all the old agony returns.

Anselmo.—Who are ye, with such sauciness to force
Our privacy?

Gerard.— Of that may I avouch
Most reverend father—Lionel, Lord of Ver,
Erst named De Toesni, is the groom; the bride,
Lady Eunonia, only child of him,
Count Hugo de St. Maur.

Anselmo.— A liberal son
Of holy Church; why do they flee him?

Gerard.— Sooth,
To tell, he doth impose impossible
Conditions, and reserveth his consent
Till their fulfilment.

Raymond.—(*aside*)— Oh, my heart goes out
To meet her!

Anselmo.— Is the lady such an age
As warranteth the sacrament required—
Her sire's bestowal wanting?
Eunonia.— I have seen
Nigh two-and-twenty years
Raymond.—(*aside*)— Too young! 'tis best,
'Tis best!
Thomas.—(*to Raymond*)—What aileth thee, my brother?
Raymond.— Naught;
A fleeting spasm—nay, naught—
Anselmo.— As yet too youthful,
And 'twere but folly to offend the Count.
Fair son and daughter, the holy Church to all
Her children is a handmaid, so with due
And lawful service everything be done,
Nor impious haste profane her hallowed rites.
Count Hugo is our friend, I may not deem
It meet against his will to sanction this
Untoward marriage of his daughter.
Eunonia.— She
May give assurance, father, that the act,
Though lacking that assent, before the heavens
Is just and blameless.
Lionel.— I will pile thy store
With golden ingots, an the marriage halts
No longer!
Anselmo.— Wouldst thou gild religion? fie!
Bring me fair evidence the Count St. Maur
Assenteth to thy marriage, or resolve
His fixed conditions, and with mine own voice
I will pronounce the benediction.
Witmund.— Good!
Else were't irregular.

Lionel.— He will not consent—
No! were the Almighty's finger on him laid
To urge it!
Raymond.—(*aside*)—Needless now to fear—they know
Me not! I must be changed indeed!
Lionel.— Unless
Beyond the power of doubt itself to doubt,
'Tis proved that Raymond, sometime Lord of Ver,
Is dead. For two years past afar and near
Continual search was made, but not a breath
Concerning him hath blest me—who can then
Resolve the hard condition?
Raymond.— That can I.
Eunonia.—Oh, father, hast thou seen that noble soul?
Tell me, and is he dead?
Thomas.— Thou brother?
Raymond.— I.
Lionel.—Heaven bless thee for it! hear'st thou that, sir prior?
Anselmo.—I hear—it needeth explication.
Eunnoia.— Say,
Sweet father, didst thou look upon his face
Before he died? He would confess to thee—
A man so evidently gentle, worn
With the deep lines of sorrow—did he speak
Of me—Eunonia? Oh, I owe him all
I am or may be! Father, wilt thou say?
Lionel.—Tell her thou venerable monk! His hand
Bestowed such gifts on me that were my voice
To rise in fitting praise, ye all would deem
That praise idolatry and heaven forgot!
Raymond.—Oh, many times within the two past years
I heard him name thy name, fair lady; he

Did ever entertain a reverent
And lasting love for thee, nor could forget
The hope which once gave glory to his life.
Lionel.—And aught of me?
Raymond.— My son, he humbly sought
Thy pardon for much wrong, and bade thee clasp
Thy love the closer to thy heart, for that
When honour seemed to thrust her from thee, she
Would go.
Anselmo.—(*aside*)—Some hidden frailty here! he shall
Be celebrant.
Eunonia.— Oh, what is love like ours
To this!
Raymond.—(*aside*)—I cannot long endure.
Anselmo.— Fair children,
If Ambrose to his words dare set the seal
Of Truth by act they seem to justify,
And also take the peril as his own—
Whatever followeth on the unapproved
Achievements—presently may be fulfill'd
Your marriage.
Raymond.— What is meant, Anselmo?
Anselmo.— Thou,
Be thou the celebrant—do thou pronounce
Their nuptial blessing at thy singular risk;
So blame—if blame ensue—shall only rest
On thee, nor Hugo bear offence to us
Poor monks who quarrel not with benefactors.
Witmund.—A fine discretion!
Thomas.— He is best our abbot.
Raymond.—Thus thou wilt sanction?
Anselmo.— Yea.

Raymond.— Then I will do it!
Help me, my God, to drink this bitter cup!
Anselmo.—Proceed we to the chapel—follow us,
Lord Lionel and thy lady; by the help
Of this good friar ye twain will soon be one.
Exeunt.

SCENE II.—*Passage before the Gate.*

THE JANITOR.

Janitor.—A mouldy loaf and sour ale! hardly worth place in my lodging yonder above the gate, where the roof now leaks, and the stairs grow more tortuous every time I climb them! The cellarer refuseth me a new suit because supplies are short! and why short? because he hath been lazy. I strive to bear ills quietly and never grumble, yet these be grievances would make a man's blood boil were the climate warm enough! 'Twas a prime brewing when the abbot's old sow fell into the vat, and privately diluted herself for our special comfort, last October! The ale hath been thin and watery ever since, with a twang of verjuice surely got by reflection from the malster's lenten countenance. Were he to tumble in the loss would be small—yet the gain would be small also. Still there is much earning thankfulness here; but who shall be our new abbot? Is't possible the chapter will heed the whims of a dying oddity? 'Twere criminal to appoint Ambrose who hath hardly courage to return my salutation, and whose ravaged frame can, surely, never bear the weight. The great archangel prevent it—lawfully or unlawfully—all's one to me so it be done! Why,

he hath a soft heart like a woman's, and when I came suddenly on him yesterday at sunset top of the cliff and disturbed his devotions, he started and blushed more like some nervous wench than a cowled monk! Abbot, forsooth! penance would become unknown and the prison a desolate waste! Discipline so relax that the fathers, grown turbulent and luxurious, would e'en drink wine in their water! The standard of virtue must be maintained, in appearance at least, or where is our reputation? Now the prior hath all claims to the office—is vigorous, able, and, moreover, my friend. Yet the best man is not always placed nighest the fire, except in hell where, doubtless, desert is properly respected. Yet whoever may be abbot, here do I escape Frinegunde, and the Church consequently hath proved a refuge indeed! I may not be by nature religious or ritualistically inclined, but, like Lot, am blest in escaping Gomorrah and leaving a wife behind. The clack-clack of her scolding tongue is well nigh forgot, and only harmeth my dreams. Therefore, I bless the discerning prior who named me Janitor, and shall ever be his true man.

bell rings.

Another visitor! he may wait. Strange how I came here to be rid of a wife and that young lord to get one! Yet, will I not backbite him (*bell rings*) for his hand is liberal and his sweetheart comely. Mayhap, gentlefolk have more comfort at home than poor people.

bell rings again.

Faith! the bell will be twisted off. Who rings?

Hugo.—(*within*)—Open, Janitor! open!

bell rings.

Janitor.—Stay thy hand! thou wilt spoil our bell. There can be no need for such clatter were the devil himself in chase!

Hugo.—(*ringing*)—Open! open, I say! open! or by Saint Michael, I will batter down the place!

Janitor.—Pretty words in a sanctuary! The impiety of the outside world groweth hugely day by day.

bell rings.

Who art thou thus disturbing peace? Give thyself a name, an thou hast one!

Hugo.—St. Maur! St. Maur! open, Janitor, for the love of God! St. Maur!

Janitor.—Whew! a testy old rascal; but the prior would baste me were I to anger him, so he must e'en be admitted.

opens the gate.

Welcome to your lordship!

Enter Hugo *and servants armed.*

Hath your lordship rung? I knew not that 'twas your lordship.

Hugo.—'Fore God, Janitor, I am tempted to knock thy head against the post! Wherefore delayedst thou?

Janitor.—I humbly beseech your lordship's pardon. I took your lordship for one of the commonalty who is expected.

Hugo.—Thou egregious knave! inform me instantly if my daughter and a gentleman have come here desiring marriage? We traced them to the shore and in the sands, and learn they were just before us.

Janitor.—A fair young lady?

Hugo.—Yea.

Janitor.—And a handsome young gentleman?

Hugo.—Yea, yea—the traitor!

Janitor.—Then such were admitted some quarter or half hour back.

Hugo.—Where are they? take me to them instantly! Where are they?

Janitor.—They are e'en now being made man and wife if indeed it be not already done.

Hugo.—Oh, I will slay him as he standeth before her! undutiful daughter! Conduct me to them, Janitor! stay not an instant!

Janitor.—We had best go straight to the church. I heard the gentleman plead for speedy celebration. Follow me, my lord, follow me, perchance there may be time.

Hugo.—Away! away!

Exeunt.

SCENE III.—*The Church. Before the altar.* RAYMOND, LIONEL, EUNONIA, GERARD, ANSELMO, THOMAS, WITMUND, *monks, and officers.* RAYMOND *vested as celebrant and so acting.* LIONEL *and* EUNONIA *kneeling before him. Solemn music as the scene opens.*

Raymond.—May she in shamefastness be grave and meek,
In holy doctrines learn'd, faithful and chaste,
Fruitful in offspring, proved and innocent,
Like Rachel gentle, like Rebecca wise,
Like Sarah true and reverend; and attain
Unto the heavenly kingdom and the rest
Prepared for those who love Him by the Lord.

Choir chant: "Ite missa est. Deo gratias."

Raymond.—The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac,
The God of Jacob with you be! Himself
Fulfil His blessing that you both may see
Your children's children to the third and fourth
Generation, and may afterward partake
Of everlasting life by Jesu's help,
The Christ, who with the Almighty Father and
The Spirit through eternity doth live
And reign one God.

Enter JANITOR, HUGO, *and retainers following.*

Janitor.— This way, my lord!
Hugo.— Withold
Thy hand, sir priest! I utterly refuse
My sanction to this marriage! Villain! thou
Hast stolen my child!
Raymond.— Too late! 'tis done, 'tis done!
Eunonia.—Forgive me, father!
Lionel.— Have no fear, sweet wife!
Anselmo.—Shall we be blameless here?
Gerard.— He chokes with anger!
Hugo.—Vengeance on him, who creeping to my hearth
Hath, like the frozen serpent, stung the hand
That fed him! Thou hast witcht my daughter, scoundrel!
Give back to me the dearest jewel left
In Time's hoar crown! False friars, this sacrilege
Shall cost ye dear! Gerard, thou knave—
Gerard.— My lord,
Sir Lionel is my master.
Lionel.— Let me speak—
Hugo.—So foul a stain my house hath never known;
Vengeance on Lionel! vengeance on the slave!

Unhappy father! O unduteous child!
My curse shall blast this desecrated rite!

Raymond.—Peace! sinner all presumptuous! Know'st thou not
That worldly wrangles have no place beneath
Our sacred roof? Wouldst thou with oaths defile
God's hallowed temple, and upbraid His priests
For due performance of a marriage blest
By heaven and earth alike? What He hath joined
Man may not sunder. Injury to thee
Or thine this deed can never bring; if blame
Be merited my single head shall bear
Alone thy worst displeasure, for the monks—
Thy fatherly bestowal lacking—turned
From what these hands have done nor countenanced
In least particular.

Anselmo.— His words, my lord,
Proclaim our innocency.

Hugo.— Juggle me none
Excuses! baseness breedeth baseness. Ye
Do live so far removed from worldliness
Our poorer virtues, such as gratitude,
Veracity, and honour have no place
Among ye!

Drogo.—(*to Raymond*)—Dear, my lord, you pale and tremble.

Raymond.—'Tis naught—'tis naught! How beautiful she is
E'en in her terror!

Lionel.— Kindly father mine,
No blame shall rest on thee nor on the house.
All may be justified.

Hugo.— What! is Raymond dead
That ye profane the solemn obligation
Between us vowed?
Raymond.— Raymond is dead.
Hugo.— Is dead?
How know'st thou that, bold monk?
Eunonia.— If he be dead,
What nobleness is quencht!
Hugo.— How know'st thou that?
Raymond.—Nay, it befits not thee to ask; but this
I know—Raymond is dead—Raymond is dead
To thee and all as ever mortal may be!
Hugo.—Didst thou know Raymond Ver, that stainless knight?
Raymond.—Ay, well, old man. I knew him better far
Than any soul on earth; God is my judge—
And he is dead I tell thee.
Hugo.— How?
Eunonia.— Alas!
Raymond.—A lowly sinner, he profest when woe
Bittered his cup of pleasure and deflowered
The promise of his life, "Brothers, I crave,"
His weary voice did brokenly beseech,
"Brothers, I crave the haven of these walls,
That ne'er again the echoes of the world
Ring in mine ear. I would be one with ye—
The lowliest of a lowly brotherhood,
Your Christly work be mine, your fare be mine,
Your lot, your life be mine." Drogo! thy arm!
And so into the friar he passeth away;
And dead to all the world, his death hath done
But good to all the world, and most to thee.

Hugo.—That voice awakeneth echoes of old days!
Tush! I grow credulous. Make clear their truth!
For else thy words confirm thee his accomplice,
Who infamously doth usurp the state
Of Raymond.
Lionel. Shall e'en age spit venom, and not
Be answerable?
Drogo.— He is beside himself,
My lord!
Raymond The ancient fire! stubborn as brave!
Drogo.—Have care, you are infirm and jaded.
Eunonia.—(*to Hugo*)— Father,
Hast thou forgot thy love?
Hugo.— Thou hast forgot
The modesty of woman, and art fallen
Down to the measure of his villainy.
My men beset the mount, save where the wave
Doth whelm the way, and, by the Lord who wept
In dark Gethsemane, thy husband there
Shall never be thy husband save in name,
Unless 'tis proved that Raymond, Lord of Ver,
Is dead.
Raymond.— Ha! help me nearer, Drogo; thanks.
Lionel.—Eunonia, courage!
Hugo.— Yea, I will wrench thee from
His arms were the archangel's wraith between us,
And keep thee virgin, though I wall thee up
Alive! Wulf, sound the trumpet!
Raymond.— Madman, hold!
Drogo.—No more, my lord.
Hugo.— Away, prove Raymond dead—
Show me his corse or bring me witnesses

Of his decease! Back, insolent! nor palter
With words! Where art thou, Raymond?
Raymond.— I am he.
Hugo.—Thou, Raymond? No, no!
Eunonia.— Raymond?
Raymond.— I am he—
Raymond. Once Raymond, Lord of Ver, now Ambrose,
A poor monk of this abbey—Drogo, leave
Me not.

Leans on Drogo.

Drogo.— Never, my lord.
Raymond.— Am I so changed
That e'en my features speak no more of me!
Hast thou forgot me, Hugo? Look!
Hugo.— So worn,
And feeble! and my sight is dim.
Eunonia.— 'Tis he!
Raymond.—Did I not charge thee keep the covenants?
Eunonia.—What smote me blind?
Lioncl.— Is't possible!
Eunonia.— But now
I see his visage clearly—wasted face—
White hairs!
Lioncl.— Shrunk from a prime majestical
To such a piteous wonder!
Raymond.— Drogo!
Drogo.— Master,
Thou art faint.
Hugo.— O, Raymond! Raymond.
Drogo.— Give room!

Hugo.—Dear heart, what was the cause? what was the cause?

Drogo.—Crowd not upon him, he is very frail.

Raymond.—Where art thou, Drogo? did she come?

Drogo.—

Knoweth not

My lord his faithful watch-dog?

Hugo.—

Raymond, speak!

Raymond.—The vesture chokes me—Hugo, I will tell

Thee all—some other morning.

Dies.

THE ENGLISH DREAM.

"To subjugate, capture, or kill the Khalifa is but an English dream". (*German newspapers, in the Summer of* 1899).

"Ireland will be able to trouble England's dreams." (*Screed-Irishism*, 1900).

"The Boer wearing a pink puggaree round his hat who ..... is a German, who speaks English well: Vlakfontein, 29th May, 1901.

"Wingate, seven miles south-east El Gedid found
Khalifa—at Omdebrikat—after sharp fight
Routed him utterly. Khalifa killed. All
Chief Emirs killed, wounded, or prisoners
But Osman Digna who fled when firing began.
Whole camp taken. Thousands surrendered. Marched
Sixty miles in sixty hours. Fought two actions.
Our casualties four men killed and seventeen wounded".

So ran, in sense, the Sirdar's telegram
That joyful-woful Saturday of next
November when, as well, we read the news
Of Enslin and how Methuen's comrades drove
Once more through air shot quick with German bomb
And bullet the tough, courageous, mobile Boer
And apter mercenaries, ridge after ridge,
From their hugged triply trenched and burrowed kopjes.

Then ravened us that dreadful week of mid
December when the same Great Hand that freed
Through ours the devastated Soudan, thrice smote
Us heavily in long-earned chastisement.

Nor eased the scourge through many after days:
Witness the morrow of His own Son's Feast
When Mafeking saw back of her Fourscore
But thirteen living and unwounded, foiled
By rebel treachery—faint Hope afeard to breathe
"Great hearts with Greatheart! yet ... can she withstand?";
Our New Year's greeting—and from Pretoria!—
"Kuruman surrendered".!, our brave patrol,
British and native, left without a gun,
Yet, crippled thus, enduring two long months
The siege—our blot, their splendour!; next, 'twas how
The easy birdlime of a forged command
Had snared the Suffolk men with battling French
And cruelly flecked his finer strategy;
Then as the hours went trembling on, in pale
Anxiety we read White's heliograph
Flasht after that the skulking foe at last
Found courage for attack and, twice driven off,
Swarmed on for fresh defeat—"Attack renewed.
Very hard pressed."—and then—"there is no sun."—
As though that Hand had barred the very light
Against us! "Hard pressed."! Not one drop of blood
True British but ached in sympathetic pain
Where'er throughout this planet the electric pulse
Throbbed tidings, till thrilling came—"Enemy
Everywhere repulsed". Scarce in thankful pride
Snatched respite than, swift-called, each straining sense
Watched the bold-crossed Tugela: had our chiefs
Learnt the grim lesson of mishap? Were Buller's
Brave words, "no turning back," true prophecy?
Was he trepanned by deadlier wile than erst—
As Europe's baser peoples voiced their hope?

Assigned the curs' part in our chastisement
These Shimeis, baring wolfish fangs, behowled
Us that vibrant-reverberate above
Their lands the deep air shook with ululation!
Suborned by hell's own champion liar, Leyds,
Their scurvy Press poured forth a stream of slime
Upon us; ten times took the towns their friends
Beleaguered; magnified defeat, when we
Had lost; belittled victory, when we
Had won; spat venom on our generals;
Cut our divisions into pieces; sent
Our army helter-skelter routed in full
Retreat to Cape Town; hooted us decadent—
Alone would Intervention place us e'en
A third-rate Power:—there was no infamy
With which their fecal fingers did not strive
To daub the British name and all men heir
To Shakespeare's language.

What a spectacle
The Lord God made of us before His angels!
For we, His vikings, berserks, fighting sailors,
The salt breath of the sea e'er in our nostrils
And blowing by our doors—we swallowed down
Their rascal tricks of freighted contraband,
Faint-heartedly surrendering rights of search
Won the world round through war and wrack with streams
Of blood and treasure through a thousand years:
Yea, paying forfeit that we dared to touch
Sham-neutral cargoes on sham-neutral ships!
Hence have they warned us from our old domain
Of Ocean—to "dictate" or peace or war

Their vaunt is!; thus from Asia Minor—which
They would thieve; thus from caftan'd Persia—which
They would thieve; thus from mandarin'd China—which
They would thieve; thus from Afghanistan—which
They would thieve; thus from Mesopotamia—which
They would thieve; thus from blind Korea—which
They would thieve; thus from ensnared Brazil—which
They would thieve; West, or East, or North, or South
We "must"—'tis their imperial phrase—resign
Intention, notion, move no handstir, toward
A further goal. They have "historic roles"
To play, "historical accounts" with us
"To settle", "world policies" to consummate,
Infinite-indefinite "minimum claims"
To press, "historic missions" to fulfil,
"Traditional tendencies" to fructify,
"Paths" to "unswervingly pursue". But we?
Such things in us—flaunts not the imperial word?—
Are mere "pretensions"; ours is "unscrupulous
Exploitation"; we must be "forced" to terms,
"Prevented", "kept in constant anxiety"
To landward, "threatened" seaward by the Powers
Imperially conjoined, offer no front
'Gainst any imperial wight's "imperious will,"
And penned within cast-iron borders fixed
Imperially by these imperial sharks,
Watch them imperially ingest the nations,
Ourselves permitted to retain our own—
Not swept from Egypt nor the Indus valley—
Until consolidated, knouted, drilled,
Aggrandized, organized into one huge
Destroyer menacing free, self-governing peoples,—
Imperial battleships, imperial hosts

Are massed imperially to subjugate
And dispossess us! Hath this globe a spot
Safe from their predatory gripe? Do not
Their parasitic hordes already invade
Our States to furthest flutter of the flag?
Do they not batten upon us; vulgarise
Our tongue? bring with them dirty ways of life,
Base manners, purulent morals, low ideals?
Send crowding through our careless-open door
Such swindling scum as baffle bankruptcy?
Such criminals as with a filthier taint
Contaminate the fester of our jails?
Unbidden guests that jostling to the board
Oust rightful heirs, nor by a dream's resolve
In thought or act put on our citizenship
Albeit engorging its advantages?
Is not permitted sojourn made pretence
To intermeddle, impudently claim
Superiority e'en to ownership?
No "Yellow Peril" can for us involve
The menace of these self-elected foes
Who from their Continental bastion—primed
With weekly plans of fell invasion—lour
Across our billowy moat with hate malign
Which were't translated into physical fact
Would roll the wave corrodent on our shore,
Would blast our atmosphere to rotting germs,
Charge every natural function with our murder:
Ours, who had liefer lend love than borrow hate,
In whom long atrophied the crotaline gland
And duct and sac and fang wherewith these yet
Secrete and spit the snaky venom!

It "well with the Childe"? Alas, my countrymen,
What mystery of inaction, drowsed advance!
What blurred envisioning the plain-scrawled fact!
What hugged effeteness! What 'blind leading blind'!
What barren "routs"! what useless "victories"!
From "Mournful Monday" to the Klip Drift rout
What cross-web of "mishap", "reverse", "surprise",
"Repulse", "disaster", "capture", "ambush", ruin
Of Opportunity by Blunder! High
Or low, general or private, still the wit
Was out! Still the astuter enemy
Withdrew e'en as he chose, unharmed
Or barely scotched, with every gun
Secure, more cruel scathe in his retreat
Than our attack! Oh, that miserable week
Of mid December, when we could only wait
In tense, shamed agony, fearing yet worse!
Oh, our Northumberlands and Irish lads
Entrapped at Stormberg! Our poor Highlanders
Butchered at Magersfontein! Our brave brigades
Paraded through a sleet of German lead
To slaughter at the Tugela's fatal drifts!
Were we not all with one groan as from one heart
Slain with our slain when, cheated victors, flasht
The futile tragedy of Spion Kop?
Nay, after that the Chief with Kitchener
Unravelled the dire tangle, French dashed on
To Kimberley, pursuit found Paardeberg,
Stout Buller battled through to Ladysmith,
Our army swept the foe a broken wave
Before them, Bloemfontein yielded, Kroonstad next,
Bold brother-hearts freed Mafeking—and glory

Is their story who died for Mafeking!—
Our tattered, hungry regiments again
Perversely halted by the long crawl o'er wide
Veldt distances of trebly-throttled traffic
Again crashed forward till Johannesberg
Was ta'en, Pretoria shrivelled from her vaunt
Into submission, out were driven Natal's
Invaders, fresh delay o'ercome our men
Along the twinned steel fought to that key-Poort
Whence, certes, with less coward Ministers
We had begun our counter-onset saving
Thousands of noble sacrificial lives
And half our lavished millions—all that makes
Humanity the masters of a land
Had passed within our keeping, and the war,
As war, was won—their crook-brained "baas" a rich,
Blaspheming, lying fugitive, apt sewer
For celt and continental filth and guest
Of a deluded, German-tutored girl-queen—
Though fifty times dispersed defeated, scant
Through capture, beaten, still our wild-cat foe
Struck deep with sharp claw seeking but to wound,
To tear, to break, to spoil, to scratch and 'scape
Where'er our men were few, our line was weak:
E'en daring when too late the southward lunge
That erst impelled in ordered, solid force
Belike had pressed us to our battleships
And filled long years with tenfold bloodier toil.

For, wonder of all wonders which this war
Blazed forth, Time, Option, Opportunity,
And Armament cogged dice secure within
His gamester-clutch, the Boer moved hamstrung on

To action: foiled ere he ventured: lost ere
He threw! Faced, then, but by ineptitude
Crass as his own to realize realities,
Unreadiness, fewer numbers, effete
Tactics, out-ranged ordnance, spilt valour, rust,
Conceit—afore his curbed foot fouled our soil
He trampled into dust of nothingness
His fond design to shog the dial-plate
Of Progress backward, holding bound for aye
Within some battlemented dungeon-keep
The Anglo Saxon mannikin of his mind!
Crowning himself thereafter by our stripes
A conqueror, when but a direly wielded scourge;
Invulnerable wrecker of the British States
When but a railway-wrecker, train-robber, convoy-thief.

Mark the Great Hand of Love in chastisement!
Mark that Great Hand of Love in aid none less
The loving!—here, where we are lashed to agony
By an inferior folk and pilloried
In writhing shame before a jeering world—
There, where through slowly-rounding years, by long
Probation, deathly groping past the bleached bones
Of immolated brothers, we thus wrought
Into a fitly-answering instrument
And used, the Dervish tyranny falls dead!
Yea, we emerged and shall emerge triumphant—
But in His might, the Avenger's, the Chastiser's,
The Maker's! Not our own. For, naught more sure
Can History witness or men's actions prove
Than that He separated us and breathed
The informing Spirit and touched our lips and filled
Our hands with fire of utterance and of deed

And thrust us forth to speak and do, and made
Us There and Then as Here and Now
For this the generations' ingathering
His human germinals of that true growth
In things political and personal
We hail as Freedom, Progress, Brotherhood,
The Federated Weal of All, whereby
Communities, like flowers, expand in light.

In the dim dawn, raying from Him who said
"All ye are brethren", faintly caught athwart
Time's chasm by churl and thane; spurned underfoot
By thieves of power—Norman, Plantagenet,
Lancaster, Tudor—flickering, kindling quick
Amid our common folk, hid, banned, re-lit,
Wafting of its pure fire o'ersea to glow
Beyond the pilgrim shrine on Plymouth Rock
In kin and kith through novel paths and dark,
Nigh quenched again, trode down, till Cromwell took
The smouldering brand within his mightier fist
And blew it into flame, and forged the glaive
Which smote our sentimental tyrant low,
And clarioned forth our peoples' high evangel
To what hath breath for ever—"Ho! know all!
We Britons are free fellow-citizens
In whom all sovran power inheres, nor more
Nor less in any one of us, being each
A square-hewn equal stone built in that Round
Which is the British States; and have, and e'er
Shall use the right to choose what form of rule
May best befit our need as fluctuant tides
Of change-evolving circumstance demand. We do
Refuse to bow the knee before that Baal

The sham-divine prerogative of kings,
Or Privilege; and stand at instant war
With Tyranny, and will to utterest force
Strike loose her thralls. We trust our liberties
To no man's keeping, subjects only of
The laws we make as these reflect the face
Of God in Christ. So help us God. Amen.";
Yet he who voiced us truly, fearlessly,
By deed momentous as by resonant word,
Bereft of Hampden and the murdered Eliot
Nor finding like constructive minds to build
On the broad pillars of Democracy,
Poised our dominions on the sword's point, and sank
Into the mire of Self and Personal Rule,
And summoned hence in thunder, left us limed
Than e'er more helpless in Dynasticism's
Rapacious tentacles, anon so sparse
Of home-made fitting idols that we must
Go begging at the Hague or fish afar
With an attenuate ancestry's long line
In fecund German ponds to hook and hoist
An alien princeling on a needless throne.
Still bargained we for Rights, nay, durst extort them:
As fettered dolts may claim a clout, and wrap
Their shackles—lightlier snapped—to ease the gall.
Still the brute general sense though dulled anew
Grew slowly-sure impregnate of that Spirit
Whose ripe fruition is true Liberty;
Conviction of injustice nerved to deeds
Which made cowed acquiescence in Abuse
Less universal; oft the loftier souls'
Hearts' blood from shameful scaffolds dripped imming-
ling

The clodded pulses of the multitude
With flamelike wine of glad self-sacrifice
Drank from that cup held to the unshrinking lip
On solitary heights by Him Who drained
Its deepest draught: disclosed through processes
Of injury, or roughly thrust within
Our gates by sharp-clawed conflict or distress
Pale inchoations of a polity
Made by and for the Many as the Few
Yeast-like were quickening in the popular mind;
Though, blindfold spendthrifts, wasted we, ill-spared,
Our blood and gold on princes' petty quarrels,
Yet thus 'twas learnt dynasties come and go,
It is The People only that remain:
Albeit we limped, our faces were set forward.

Across the Atlantic sturdy brothers brought
To birth through lusty throes a younger England,
Most loving, loyal, toward us; with our own
Keen zest for danger, hate of tyranny,
Surpassing seamanship, resolve to bond
The State's foundation deep on Freedom girt
By Law and Order; bearing shrined anew
O'er ever-widening ways that Living Light
To burn more fervid-splendent than upon
The parent altar; taming trackless wilds
To bear home's harvest and the thriving town;
Winning a new continent that the old flag
Should float above it. Not of the British Folk,
Not ours, the mulish handiwork, the crime
Inexpiable which wrested these to just
Revolt against unjust exaction! That
The besotted deed of clodpoll royalty

And clodpoll royalism! That is to thank
The creeping palsy of the Crown and its
Attendant lackeying! For tolerance
Whereof and Cromwell's failure have we paid
With loss of Greatest Britain, and the World's
Command. Nor from our sober Commonwealth
Nor aught of ours the maniac frippery
And haggard Terror huddled on by France
With blood-bedrabbled fingers for the ript
Cere-cloth, playing the harlot, shaming us
Back to Reaction's barren bed and breasts
Of our spayed, tutelary goddesses
Expedience and Conventionalism.

Still on

We hobbled, bruise, and scar, and debt, the pay
For work that loosed the helpless Continent
From vassalage beneath the imperial heel
Of its great soldier-genius who constringed
His greatness to an emperor's narrow bound
And shattered all. No bludgeoning could beat
Us blind enow to count a thing benign
Our royal would-be fugleman's "crowned friends'"
Unholy Alliance. Sick to the soul of war,
And loathing violence, we laid firm hold
On Compromise and wrought it to a means
Of wider influence that argument
By blows might cease among us; dourly set
For many a fall from massed Stupidity
"Reform" became our battle-cry throughout
The land: like Claudias Lysias "with a great sum"
We raised the blot of slavery from our name;
Compelled repeal where statutes made a man
Less than a fellow-citizen on plea

Of Race contemned or Creed bar-sinistered
By owls in office; fought to save and keep
Our ownership in elemental things
And their administration, booned a trust
To all for all in Time, and thus derived
Beyond the scope of alienative power
In any generation, yet oft impawned
By our imprescient sires or snatched by keen
Imbanded hucksters who with influence bred
Therefrom and crutched by bland legality
Sway legislative acts to lease anew
Old robberies; stood in the pillory
Behowled, mucked, bruised, with slitted nose, cropped ears,
And branded cheeks, that they who hooted, hurled
The filth, or cast the stone, might freely vent
In words—no risk but Truth's—their very soul
Impenal; battered at their door until
We forced the lords and bishops to annul
Inhuman codes which gave a blood-revenge
In fire and hemp against the thief; withstood
The arrogant claim that Rule is coronet-tagged
Or as wealth's heirloom passes; strove to lift
The labourer from his dungheap and enlarge
Him with the artisan from sodden ways
Of swinish acquiescence in imposed
Abasement, ignorance, and deprivation—
Of these and like-blanched monads of our blood
To form the ruddy life-fraught corpuscles
Which singly-integrally building up
Shall fill the pregnant arteries of the State;
Sent through far zones our thus enfranchised sons
To found with freer hands on freer soil

New nations 'neath the marching Union Jack,
Unhampered by the backwash of the French
Tornado winning territories huge
On whose vast area spaced were Britain but
A patch; subduing millions less by force
Than wise administration, 'mid whose swarms
Our folk were as one swallowed in a crowd;
Making clean-handed Justice theirs as ours—
The white man hung if he have slain the black,
The black man hung if he have slain the white,
Transmuting barbarism slowly save
Where cruel and obscene, uprooting not
Wild weeds of harmless custom, patiently
Erasing mutual ignorance, distrust,
Aversion, leading on the swaddled mind
To higher use of life in comradeship:
Hereto, our pioneers going on before
O'er stranger seas from lands unknown rolled back
The screen and planed the way for all who chose
To come. The greatest labour ever dared
The greatest mastery e'er achieved by man.
Since aught was writ, or thought, or known, or done,
There's no such record, nor can be again;
The world's too trodden and Time's bourn too spanned.

Thus by His grace Who made us islanders,
And conquerors of our conquerors, and bestowed
The Vision and the Will and Might and Means—
Unworthy we!—Who bade us brotherly
Receive His guests the needy and oppressed
When these sought home with us from alien shores
And gain a defter deftness, newer arts,
In recompense: and even led us on,

Ay, goaded, when our coward footstep lagged,
Ay, scourged us when our coward hand refused,
To the long siege of Power intrenched behind
Hereditary fetichism, abused,
Usurped, or blindly delegated: thus
By His grace, be it "old glory" under, be it
The blazoned crosses, wheresoe'er may rule
The Anglo Saxon, or as helmsman stand,
Bedizened though she strut in feudal rags,
Or whore't with mammonism—as we in sloth
Or stupidness permit—Authority
Is but one fellow-citizen who serves
Another: woven among us right and right
'Tween man and man unwritten or inscribed
Our laws in large are freemen's; new or old,
In custom, institution, aught the like,
Peculiarly an attribute of us
The Anglo Saxon, much is builded up
On precious stone imperishable which yet
Shall pierce the sky in fair-wrought pinnacles
Of lasting beauty and utility;
Our furious challenge of injustice done
To any as 'twere done to each and all
Bespeaks a passion greater than ourselves
Evolved in conflict through development
Impersonal essence of the public soul
With scorn of self and prescript that shall force
Reversal, reparation, and hurl off
Recurrence; desolating wounds, undreamt
Calamity, devouring accident,
Or wrought by rebel kin or withering foe
Or cataclysmal thrusts of cosmic things,
Are borne with an austere serenity

That doth permit nor tear nor groan for ease
From lesioned brain or lacerated heart;
And widely Brotherhood is half-achieved
Or motived or beseemed—mere dream no more

Inerrant, patient, deftly-moulding Hand
Invisibly quickening mind as visibly matter,
That dost impart men's differing qualities—
As these potential for an absolute end
Of tyranny within the State in us,
Thrift in the Teuton, brilliance in the Gaul—
And showest in marvellous workmanship Thyself
An infinite-perfect, perfect-infinite
Artificer: doth not Thine exquisite touch
On massed immensity or granuled jot,
Through myriad phase of fixed or plastic form
Implanting functive processes immeshed
With beauty, trumpet an Intelligence
Effecting the creational intent
Of One Ineffable Will? If man can yoke
The unseen electric pulse an operant slave
To mechanism answering his design
Shall not the Master Craftsman's thought be like
Dynamic in His illimitable sphere?
Shall He Who builded up in Speech a bridge
From soul to soul, whereo'er communities
Do throng, and tissued every sentient thing
With potence fit to change in Change—shall He
Refuse us counsel or a sign while e'en
We lead by wraiths of sound on writhing lips
Deaf mutes to understand? Is there no Word
From Him that, held, were pillar'd cloud and fire

Upon our march To-Day?

Hearken!

" Protest

Thou solemnly they have not thee but Me
Rejected that I should be their King."

"Them will

I cause to be tossed to and fro among
All kingdoms of the earth".

Are we more nigh

Than Israel of old days to the Divine
And more compound of toughening human steel
That our imperialism less miserably
Shall rot away the core of citizenship
And loosening our loins to water, thrust
Us down through spurning Time ungirt of power,
A newer Waif of Nations?

Hearken yet!

"All ye are brethren.", "They the Gentiles count
As rulers lord it over them, and those
Their great ones wield authority. Not so
With you! But he who would be great, must be
Your serving-man; and who among you would
Be first, must be the slave of all"., "New wine
Must be put into fresh wine-skins." "A house
Against itself divided cannot stand.",
"Ye cannot serve God and Mammon"., "Be ye
Therefore perfect as is your Father in Heaven".,
"The Truth shall make you free.", "Love one another.",
"Fear not.", "Abide in Me.", "Have faith in God."

What is the English Dream?

To follow Him

Who calls as ne'er man called: as ne'er men followed:

Transmuting our vile dross to His fine gold;
In Public Life, in Public Laws, in Public Deeds
To do, to be, these things; to make them Us:
Thereon upbuilding of the British States
That Great Fraternal Federal Commonwealth
They plan, where all shall be for All, and all
In Him, Who now hath drawn aside the veil
Of Time and Circumstance that we discern
This greater work awaiting and Now take hold
Or shrink back shrivelling to a petty realm.

Clear Means, effective citizenship of each!
Clear, ere the effective citizen is, must be
The human unit humanly effective!

These primal human dues avowed and paid
Shall form a fourfold-banded basal course
For our broad wall inseverably knit
With that Eternal Rock whereon we build.
For, then,—as do in crowding millions now—
No woman, child, or man beneath our flag
Will famish underfed from birth to age
Denied one hour's full vital force in nerve
Or blood or muscle, flabbed in marrow as mind
Past power of stiffening once 'gainst ill dragged down
To drunkenness, compliance, apathy,
With every sense depraved and dully stung
On the immediate morsel; nor will they
Rot in a reeking slum or sweater's den;
Nor cower in rags; nor longer strive equipt
By irresponsible officialdom
With spavined jades, a sawdust coulter, shoes
Of straw, blue-spectacles, red-tape for reins
And gear to plow the stony upland fronting.

Not surer death! Yea, if the Boers' keen knife
Hath failed, a sharper scalpel of Disaster
More dire will hack away like cancroid growths
Our narrow-mindedness, self-complaisance,
Distortion, stupidness, frivolity,
Submission, idol-worship, callousness,
Until with vision clarified and wills
On active solidarity determined,
By freest Gift direct or indirect,
Time-blunted lendings, graduated wage,
Diffusion propped by wisely-tallied aid—
Whate'er may fully match the circumstance—
We tax our prodigal wealth, resources huge,
Untenanted vast latent-fruitful lands
To end this gnawing mockery of life,
Blot out this haunting hell of wastrel souls,
Dispel this choking fog of sciolism,
That all our Own at last will have their own
And yield the rounded human entity
Fit, equal part of one regenerate Whole.

Hence our effective citizen will emerge,
With strong hands competently taking hold
The States' affairs, a solemn duty grasped
Nor longer like a jester's bawble loll'd
But bounden obligation by the law,
Austerely penalised for least default.

Hereto his citscript: an indefeasible
Proprietary title-deed of him himself
As one co-ordinate personal working part
In the Community's administration;

Inoptionally his what day doth end
The settled nonage, with consecrating oath
Of fealty to the People and the Flag;
Clear record of that duty done at each
Momentous milestone on the civic way;
Unchallengeable voucher he is he
In whatso corner of the British States
Be chosen a home, there straightway to fulfil
Sovran prerogatives of citizenship;
With due inscrollment of the bargained years
A mandate instant on our treasuries—
If Need require—for seemly maintenance
Nor doled nor humbling; bond of broadening good
For all, his citscript, till he pass to that
'Abiding city' of the Yonder Land.

The Power and Values occupancy alone
Creates through those who occupy a country
And makes their imprescriptible and joint
Possession, will no more be frothed away
In representative futilities,
But handled and administered direct
In individual actuality.
Hence our effective citizens everywhere
As one totality will integrate
The People's Council: supreme instrument
Of their executive resolve: to mean
Or main to local or to general
Affairs elastically adaptable:
In the forlornest cranny of our wide
Dominions where men may meet as in our dense
Metropolis, alike for pioneer
And multitude through aptly graded form

Subserving all: a-work full functioning,
Unstayed, unswerved, through each for each to one
Sole end the common weal; to keep what is
Of Old befits; adopt, assimilate
What is of New that nourishes; expel
Effete survival howsoever clutched;
To reconstruct, reconstitute, establish;
Appropriate legislation; tax; expend,—
With rigorous check to the last inch and doit;
To choose, appoint, remove those who within
Our borders are for any Place employed
Executively, with or without a wage,
From Chiefest to the Lowliest, held in strict
Account of full responsibility:
Internal or external to control
Relations of the State; make War and Peace;
Grip things alert to every shifting phase,
Yielding no tittle of authority;
Retaining and maintaining all that is
And is implied by sovranty: in like
Creative saneness linking part with part
Interdependently co-operant
Devolved in finely-modulate force to shape
From out the Small the Large, the Large the Small,
Attain among His cosmic processes
Who moulds the atoms to a universe—
The Living Nations' Living God.

Thus, then,
The Dawn will be accepted as the Dawn
And not Continuing Night; we shall emerge,
At last, Ourselves, not bide Reflected Ghosts;
Not tarry blinking self-complacently

In garments long outworn; not still pack on
The next-street goodman neighbour's tongue our grave
Concerns, our honour, and our interests,
But for the politician substitute
The Effective Citizen and for politics
Effective Citizenship. Gentle and simple,
Simple and gentle, we shall stand, at last,
Together fellow-labourers, each for all.

St. George's Channel to a river shrink,
The Green Isle as ourselves home-rule herself
Being part of our home rule, a British State;
Proconsular rule dissolved, the federal bond
True union ever closelier drawn, and judged
Not by their fools but by their Fusiliers
Her people won to win prosperity,
Both bludgeon and shillelagh cloven to light
Fresh fires of industry, the happy Land
Swarmed with her happy owners laughing up
To heaven in tillaged richness, barren but
Of indigence, of rancour, and of strife.

Among us all will sharp amercement wait
And loathed disgrace on them who should have known
And might have aided of their vicinage
If any hunger, or bear rags, or herd
Together, yea, or rest illiterate;
For National Thrift exacting worth for worth—
Good Fairy Thrift despised and banned before—
Will gain huge revenues dealt cunningly
In wise beneficence for body and mind:
Youth with enabling Knowledge armed, Age rid
Of workhouse-dread.

Extinguished as the Aros', but that Place—
Be it least esteemed or most exalted held—
Will stand which serves the public purpose well
In paid, approved performance: Brains, not Birth,
Merit, not Influence will solely clothe
With Office, Best for Best; and full reward
Will faithful service win, yet personal, that,
To him who earns it, not for his descendants!

Not left a plaything for the idle rich,
Not made an appanage by a lordly Caste,
Nor borne occultly juggled from plain sense
Into the fearful scourge of Militarism,
Our warlike puissance on land and sea
Stripped bare to sinewy Fighting Force combined
And organized in one clear operant plan
Where floats the Flag, therein will make and hold
Each British citizen his able part
A simple duty like sobriety,
Politeness, honesty: shrewd service wrought
Ungrudged at every point that no keen edge
Or welded rivet fail throughout the sure,
Sufficient Weapon, worn and wielded lief:
None mustered conscript 'mid the ready millions.

Our Own will First acknowledged stand for claims
And rights to whatsoe'er hath gain and good
With us before the alien; disappear
The mongrel Briton, Anglo-This or -That;
No tongue but English given official worth;
Naught having mandate from a foreigner
Conceded institutional force; withal

The alien, tested and approved, of grace
Graffed in Our Own.

Labour, grown wise, will strike
The Lout Saint Monday from his calendar,
Cease making productivity a game
At blindman's-buff, with trained intelligence
Impress Invention to her topmost flight
Through regnant Science bridled method-wise
For increased output to the furthest verge
Of widening possibilities, destroy
The foreman-shark, with open ear and mind
Alertly catch the faintest motive hint's
Transmission of abated manual toil,
Content alone in discontent with less
Than present Best and First industrially,
Nor trampled slave nor blind antagonist
Nor co-conspirator of Capital
But winning fair returns for both in wage
And interest-charge for honest Work and Use,
Copartner thus, employing though employed,
Together mated as Industrialism—
The People being their Masters, not their prey—
To serve the public needs, with margined price
'Tween rightful cost and sale adjusted due,
Under control of the Community.

The Press will cease to feed us British folk
With pap pontifical; to cowardly
Humour our cowardice by plastering slime
Of lies around ill tidings till reverse
Take on success; to label genuine men
In cruel spite that these think other thoughts

And tread a different rut; will graciously
Permit the Fact sometimes to show itself
Unmuffled by Opinion; cease to play
Choragus for the new imperial cult,
A showman for those staged monstrosities
Begot of Idol-worship, Ignorance,
And Feudalism, thrust on the credulous throng
As demiurgic, semi-divine, which else
Would perish of their own inanity:
Cease drumming, piping, and the reiterate bawl—
"Walk up! walk up! most splendid sight on Earth!
Exalted personages, demigods,
Archangels, pure-bred seraphim, without
A flaw, immaculate, impeccable,
Who could not, if they might, do wrong, yet deign
To mumm it like mere mortals and perform
Most human tricks. Walk up! fall down, and worship!
Behold, His Gracious Majesty So-and-So
Can smile six inches! Kaiser What's-his-name
Is twenty colonels! The Queen of Such-a-place
Wears gold-ribbed boddices! The Sovereign Lord
Of You-know-where doth condescend to grow
A purple pimple on his conquering nose!
The Duke of This-or-That sneezed thrice last night
And slept but badly, troubled with the wind—
It blew hard here, our readers may remember!
King What-d'ye-call-him's caught a cold—'twill turn,
'Tis feared, to mumps! Walk up! The greatest show
On Earth! Walk up! fall down, and worship! wor-
ship!".
Nay, Humbug and Conventionalism those dear
Familiars of the printing-house will pass,
And e'en conceivably may editors

Their sanctums ancient guard Expedience
Replace with new-won Truth.

India will not
Exist for us, but we for India; she
No golden egg sucked dry; her voice,
Not scrimped Officialdom's, command regard;
Quit blind evasion of our answerableness
Though pomp and luxury perish by the deed
Will British treasure loose the debt which gives
Impoverishment for Harvest to her starved
Perenially bankrupt Farming Man;
Withdrawn the Clumsy Finger, and set up
Expertest methods of development
That scratch no surface with a wooden plow
But make deep application of all means
Known or devisable with patient skill
To every tiniest chance of betterment;
Conserved distributed the rain, canalled
The land, out-irrigated Famine drown
Into legend; beside the homelier steam
Will generators wring from flume and wave
Electric energy to operate
And haul for soundly prospering industries
Machine and product the quickened country through;
Abjured our vain conceit of vassalage,
And prudently enfranchised, led, and taught
Her wakening multitudes will squarely stand
On Fitness proven by intelligent
Appraisal and pursuance gladly robed
In sovran rights of British citizenship
And sitting at our Federal Council Board:
India become a British State! Where then

The vulnerable heel aggression seeks?
India a Tower of Strength impregnable!

Cast out by Time on equatorial space
Or indolent island of the tropic main
Forgot of influences that humanise
Inheriting an undeveloped brain,
The children-races trusted to our hand
Will follow where we firmly guide them on
Beyond barbaric ways and wildernesses
By happy leading-strings of unified
Adapted systems of protection, training,
Administration, justice, settlement,
To higher welfare, win, and proudly wear
The sober garb of British citizens:
Or African or Ocean Islander,
In self-respect distinct, yet at our side
Marching, one same red blood beneath the skin,
United 'gainst a common enemy.

We will vouchsafe the Continentals' howl
Of racial hate only disdain; for we
Belong not unto Europe but the World,
While they with eyes by Europe's dust bedimmed
Inably blink that goal sublime whereto
The Anglo Saxon presses: sharper none
Reprisal than our heartiest laughter deal
Their insolent pretension to assume
The conduct of our national affairs;
Receive their proffer for a "secret" pact
With bubbling humour, well remembering
That daggered spot beneath our sore fifth rib
Oft kindly bared by courtier ministers

And neither preyed on by our arrogant
Scrap-knowledge or conniving vanity:
Nay, humble scholars we will learn what they
Can teach worth knowing, diligently scrape
Away our crusted self-sufficiency,
Acquire aught theirs of that preciser line
Assuring better work or workmanship;
And, thankful debtors wishing to repay
Their boon with e'en a greater gift, that these
Who bravely won external Liberty
May gain Her inner self, we will confer
Fair acting copies in a plain round script
Of Magna Charta, of The Bill of Rights,
And of our custom Equal Justice cleped.

Across the seas which sunder yet unite
Will Briton unto Briton reach out hands
That brother's hand in brother's hand may clasp
Where'er are Britons—ay, in God's good hour,
Where'er the English tongue rings dominant;
Drawn near and nearer in one common bond
Of broader Freedom ever broadening
On bases of eternal righteousness,
Bold wisdom energizing every means
And seizing every opportunity
Which lawfully can bring the multitudes
True welfare in glad safety, watched by Might
Assorting our vast interests and domains
And organized in close reticulations
Ungapped, that held by sleepless Vigilance
Afloat, ashore concertedly aye ready
Will make, though not one ship or man be moved,
The brazen threat "Partition of proud England"

Fall idly as an idiot's vaunt that he
Will void the sky of light, flung at the sun

Consolidated thus unshakenly,
Ingrained again with brave initiative,
Fulfilment of responsibility
In public things the individual act,
Three simple terms will form our Constitution,
The Two existing to procure the Third,
They being The People's Power, The People's Will
The People's Good.

As Higher Forms in their
Advance drop parts grown useless, we shall leave
Rejected on the rubbish-heap of Time
Hereditism, Parties, rulers, caste,
Imperialism, "subjects", monarchies,
Monopolies, conspiracies of wealth—
Ay, e'en to the demonetizing of money
And hanging "Captains" of Pickpocketry!—
Cliques, Privilege, Cabinets, governments,
Unwitting seven-years-member tyrannies:
So following His creational intent
And processes Who reconstructs, adapts,
Excises till from the Inferior is
The Superior moulded, we shall build up
In Law and Order's factive sanity
That Great Fraternal Federal Commonwealth
Where all shall be for all and All in God,
One among many brethren in the Christ,
Adown the ages more and more by act
Continually approaching Earth to Heaven

That is the English Dream.

Make it come true,
All Britons! Closelier scan: it is no dream,
But natural consummation if ye choose:
For choice is yours To-Day: To-Morrow, gone!
The olden ways by which we clomb have served
Their turn: now bend they downward to decay,
Disintegration, death. The Higher Path
Before ye mounts: the Larger Day hath broke
Above it: come! ascend. Else, there is Doom.
Else will the etherous waves of sensitive Space
Thrill with their saddest record of this world
Clear-vocal to the Omnipotent Majesty:
"They do refuse: they fear: they blind themselves:
They play the zany still. O Master, they
Have failed!": the Future, bidden to Speech: "Unborn
For aye The British States, Britain become
A base dependency, her Freer Souls
Or at her engorgèd heart, or south, or west,
Or east, withdrawn combined to make a yet
More great America. India to Russia,
Egypt to France transferred. The Teuton waked
From mediaevalism, the Latin shook
From apathy, the Slav from childishness:
O'erpassing and o'ermastering, each for each,
The unworthy Isles".

Were Justice, otherwise?
Or Righteousness? or Truth? Creator? God?

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